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Cathollic priest shot dead in Ilocos Norte

Sharapova crushes US Open opponent

US senator arrested in airport toilet claims he's not gay

LTO identifies owners of vehicle that brought hazing victim to hospital

Gov't loses P2M daily to oil smuggling in Subic

Kintanar widow: I can fly to The Hague to testify

By Fe Zamora

THE WIDOW OF RETIRED BRIGADIER GEN. JOSE MA. Souter for the murder of her husband hopes that the suspect is given due process.

She said she can testify on the message sent to the house by the widow of one of the two rebel leaders allegedly behind ...

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, August 10, 2006 / 64 / 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 261 / P10 / www.inquirer.net

Dutch envoy: There's basis for arrest

By Cynthia D. Balana, John Ladaw Jandiana and Akiah Popa

POLICE SEARCHING SELF-EXILED FORMER leader Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands on Tuesday became their tool in a bitter row between the Philippines and the Netherlands over the arrest of Sison, Dutch Ambassador to the Philippines Robert Hermus said yesterday over a Philippine government TV station.

Hermus said that an indictment in the press statement of the Dutch national prosecutor's office, however, was unrelated to criminal activities in the Philippines, specifically his ordering from the Netherlands the murder of two former communists—Romulo Kintanar in 2005 and Arturo Tabara in 2004.

Kintanar and Tabara had broken away from the Stalinist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). (For related story see this page.)

The CPP-claimed responsibility for the murders of Kintanar, saying the former NPA chief was a military agent.

In Maharlika, officials said the Philippines would provide evidence to prosecute Sison, founding chair of the CPP in the Netherlands.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, who blasted at a press conference in Malacañang when he admitted he was "surprised" about Sison's arrest, said the government helped the widows of ...

SEE PAGE A6

NDF warns arrest to end peace talks, orders more strikes

By Christine F. Esguerra, TJ Burgonio and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE LEFTIST NATIONAL DEMOCratic Front yesterday warned the arrest of exiled rebel leader Jose Ma. Sison could spell the end of peace talks with the Arroyo administration.

Hand in hand with the warning, the ...

SEE PAGE A6

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY: A wide picture window dominates the 3rd floor of the National Democratic Front headquarters in Utrecht, Netherlands, where Jose Ma. Sison held office before his arrest on Tuesday. The NDF office was also raided by Dutch police, who asked CDs, computers, books and documents, according to an NDF staff member.

Abalos tied to NBN deal

Solon cites many trips to China for golf, sex

By Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon

COMMISSION ON ELECtions Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. may have played a key role in the ZTE Corp. of China bugging the country's national broadband network (NBN) project with a $329-million bid, an opposition congressman yesterday said.

Apparently, Chairman Abalos' numerous trips to China—courtesy of ZTE and his golf partner with the officers of ZTE—can hardly be characterized as just friendly and totally innocuous. He was a man on a mission," Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla said in a privilege speech.

"Could it be that (his mission is worth) P15 billion?" he asked. The NBN project would connect all government offices.

Padilla said Abalos played golf with executives of the Chinese telecommunications firm in Shenzhen and in Mandaluyong City where the Comelec chair reserved an August just "weeks before April 2007" when the contract was signed.

SEE PAGE A6

REFLECTIONS ON DISCONTENT: Malacañan's bulimic mirrors the image of KMU, Migrante and other militant groups marching toward the Dutch Embassy to condemn the arrest of Sison. AP PHOTO

No strangers on int'l day for 'desaparecidos'

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THEY ARE STRANGERS TO ONE another but a common cause has brought them together as daughters—to rescue their missing parents from the hands of their captors.

Joining the hundreds of families of "desaparecidos" who will march in Plaza Miranda today, the International Day for the Disappeared, are Lorena Santos, 24, and May Mei Bonifacio, 20.

They are among the latest additions to the mounting list of family members searching for parents or children in lesser known cases of enforced disappearances in the country.

Lorena's father, Leo Velasco, a ...

SEE PAGE A6

peace consultant of the National Democratic Front, was "abducted" in the morning of Feb. 19 in Cagayan de Oro City while on his way to a meeting.

May Mei's mother, Luisa Posa-Dominado, a survivor of the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship and a staunch Bicol-based human rights advocate, disappeared on the night of April 12 after three armed men waylaid the van taking her home from Antipas.

At the march today, by numbers might just repeat those two women or any other angry militant in another politically charged protest action against the government.

But the public eye might miss

SEE STRANGERS, A6

'PING-PONG DIPLOMACY'

Senate votes to reopen 'Garci'; playing tape on hold

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE LAST NIGHT VOTED TO reopen the "Hello Garci" case but averted a potentially divisive showdown by hearing—not the question of whether or listen to the controversial taped tape.

In closed door caucus, the senators put off the debate on whether to limit the probe to millaray's wiretapping operations or to include in its inquiry allegations of massive cheating in the 2004 elections.

They also agreed that the probe would be conducted by three committees holding joint hearings instead of by the committees of the whole, where all 23 senators will be taking part.

But the administration and opposition senators emerged from the two-hour long session satisfied with the concessions, which scrapped a possibly explosive confrontation among members on an issue dear to Malacañang.

The Hello Garci tape contains wiretapped phone conversations supposedly between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano on how to rig the results of the 2004 presidential election.

As agreed upon by the senators, the probe will now be undertaken by the committees on national defense and security (chaired by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon) on the lead agency, with the participation of the committee on accountability of public officers and investigations (co-blue ribbon), chaired by Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano), and the committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws (chaired by Sen. Richard Gordon).

SEE PAGE A6

Bishops fail to heal split of 2 'Couples'

By Nikko Dizon

PHILIPPINE PRELATES YESTERDAY failed to resolve a split in Couples for Christ (CFC) but remained optimistic that its squabbling leaders would finish out their conflicts and remain one of the Catholic Church's largest lay movements in the world.

"The split will be temporary but both parties will remain open to reconciliation in the future," Bishop Gabriel Reyes reported following a daylong ...

SEE PAGE A6

'Queen of Mean' leaves dog $12M

NEW YORK—LEONA Helmsley's dog will receive to live on opulent life, and there be buried along side her in a mausoleum, the two of Helmsley's grandchildren got nothing

QUEEN, A6

Art docs work on 'dying' Botong murals in PGH

By Alison W. Lopez

LIKE THE SICK PATIENTS BEing wheeled into the country's first public hospital, the "blistered and crackled" paintings in the lobby of the Philippine General Hospital were in dire need of immediate attention.

But just when they were on the brink of "collapsing," the four murals created by National Artist Carlos "Botong" Francisco in 1953 were saved by the National Museum with valuable help from the IS Embassy.

"They were very weak, very deteriorated. If nobody noticed

ART DOCS, A6

FIGHT TREASURE: US envoy Kristie Kenney listens to conservator Wilda Estevanez explain how he restored, with a lot of US help, Botong Francisco's mural, "History of Philippine Medicine," at PGH today

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WEATHER FORECAST

Priest shot dead in Ilocos

By Cristina Arcadio
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—"WHAT are they doing to us priests?"

Fr. Leonardo Ruiz of the Laoag diocese's Social Action Center raised the question shortly after a 9-shot pistol, 30-second fusillade by still unknown assassins on Tuesday.

Rapanan, 46, had just left a house in Barangay Parina, Paoay, where he had dinner and performed a prayer service at around 10 p.m. when the gunmen attacked. He was hit several times, most of them in the back, as he was about to board his Toyota Hi-Ace van.

Police recovered 10 spent shells for an assailant's rifle from the scene.

"This is a sad day for the Catholic community," Ruiz told the Inquirer by phone. "We just don't kill anyone, especially a priest."

Rapanan was the first Catholic priest in Ilocos Norte to have been killed by assassins' bullets in recent church history.

He had been the priest at the St. Isidore Parish in Dingli since 2001. He was also appointed diocesan spiritual director in 2001.

Ordained in 1987, he was first assigned in the St. Michael's Parish in Carrisian from 1988 to 1989.

Police said the homicide could not have been politically motivated because Rapanan was not known to be involved in any church advocacy outside his parish.

RAPANAN

The victim mainly performed administrative functions, said Ruiz, who heads church-initiated activities such as the anti-"patronage" campaign and anti-contraceptive protection.

Ruiz said Rapanan was a member of the diocese's Commission on Temporalities, which is tasked with looking into the properties of the church. Aside from his priestly duties, Rapanan looked into the welfare of the priests' children's hospitalization and retirement.

The killing has sent a chilling message to members of the clergy, especially those who are known to be active in church advocacy, Ruiz said. Rapanan was not known to be involved in church causes that could cause the ire of certain people, "yet he was killed brutally," he added.

Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Ilocos regional police director, said he would personally supervise the investigation of the murder. He said the police had formed a task force to look into the matter. With a report from Yolanda Sariego Pastrana, Inquirer Northern Luzon

AN APPARENTLY ALIVE Jesús a Secretary Raul Gonzalez is helped to his chair during yesterday's meeting of the National Security Council in Malacañang. His absence is still a mystery, although he said he was hospitalized a few weeks ago for bleeding ulcers.

Amnesty for Reds who yield OKd

By Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG GOVERNMENT'S Hatpatnugot approach to ending armed rebellion, the National Security Council has Tuesday approved in principle a proposal for the grant of amnesty to communist rebels who surrender and lay down their arms.

With President Dhanapagid Arroyo presiding, a meeting of security and justice officials in the NSC discussed in detail the proposal for an amnesty proclamation for members of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

However, the President wanted to get additional inputs from other national leaders, past and present, and ordered the convening of a Full NSC meeting next Tuesday, to include former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Gordon Ajanita, senior congressional leaders and local government executives.

A listed personalities of the amnesty proposal will be ready in that meeting, said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Mr. Arroyo also wanted a congressional concurrence with such a presidential proclamation, he said.

On Friday, Mr. Arroyo presided over a peace assembly for Central Mindanao held in Tagbilaran. Bohol, during which she ordered the Armed Forces to crush the communist insurgency (the Maoist rebellion in Mindanao) and "clear terrorists" before her term ends in 2010.

But she said the government would continue to use "hand and soft power" in dealing with insurgency and extremism.

Jesus Dureza, presidential adviser for peace, said that in her Tuesday's meeting, the NSC members had a "common consensus that it is something that we can work on."

But for it to be legal and binding, a presidential proclamation, which he expects to be issued before Christmas, should be concurred into by both chambers of Congress, he said.

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Air Force aces join Basilan operations

By Tarra Quismundo

TO AVOID A REPEAT OF THE JULY 10 Basilan debacle blamed on the lack of air support, the Philippine Air Force (PAF) is sending its highly trained officers to the battlefield to hone the military campaign against Moro rebels by enhancing ground-coordination during combat operations.

PAF chief Lt. General Horacio Tolentino told the Inquirer that the Air Force would deploy a "sufficient number" of highly trained aviators to Basilan to serve as ground guides for pilots providing air support or for ancillary efforts.

Tolentino declined to reveal further details for security reasons.

"We will be sending Air Force officers and enlisted personnel to be embedded with the ground troops. They will work as forward air controllers on the ground, directing our pilots to the target," Tolentino said.

Forward air controllers are tasked to guide pilots to their targets by accurately giving the location of the enemy. Usually, however, pilot guidance is provided after hours that are by no means buffeted with enough gunfire from choppers.

Feedback from those on the ground, usually from the army and the Marines, is also crucial for target confirmation to avoid non-grata, like the July 10 incident under the military's rules of engagement.

That time, PAF has decided to put its men on the ground to do the direction themselves.

"Tactically, it will help because these officers can give positive information on the target immediately," said Tolentino, a helicopter pilot who led air support and strafing maneuvers during the Mindanao hostilities in the mid-'70s.

It was a tactic rarely done but deemed worth the time as a lapse in ground coordination was among the supposed reasons for the pull-back of 41 engaged Scout Rangers cited in the incident on July 10. Fourteen Marines were killed that day.

Tolentino said said pilots called to drop ammunition on enemy territory that day made some runners with troops on the ground, but communication was sketchy. Helicopters decided to turn back as they could not spot the target clearly, lacking proper guidance from the ground.

Friendly troops were also too close to the enemy that dropping bombs without target confirmation was no option.

On top of operational control, PAF men on the ground will also help operation commanders assess the efficiency of air support, the official said.

GMA leaves for KL for 'social visit'

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO IS leaving today for a "social visit" to Malaysia.

Mr. Arroyo will attend the 50th anniversary celebrations of Malaysia's independence in Kuala Lumpur on Aug. 31 upon the invitation of Malaysian King Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin.

But she will also discuss the resumption of peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which the Malaysian government hosts.

"The President will take the opportunity to reiterate to her Malaysian hosts the Philippines' strong commitment to the peace process and at the same time update the Philippine community on developments here at home," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

The President will depart at 2 p.m. today with a small delegation.

Mr. Arroyo will also take advantage of her trip to meet with the local Filipino community tonight, where she is expected to talk about developments at home, before joining other leaders for the celebration of Malaysia's independence tomorrow.

She is expected to be back in Manila at 3:30 a.m. on Saturday. —Aaliyah Lobregat-Jurodilana

AD CONGRESSMEN. Officials of the 20th Philippine Ad Congress and the Philippine Ebak Inquirer join hands after yesterday's signing of a memorandum of agreement for the holding of the annual affair. They are: Jessi Advincula, Inquirer assistant vice president and marketing director; Rose Romero, Inquirer senior vice president for marketing and sales; Yolly Y. Ong, overall chairperson of the congress; Mateo Villanueva, congress administrative committee chairperson; and Virginia B. Obiet-a, Inquirer VP for advertising. [STORY ON A17]

Preparation for verdict an 'overkill,' says Erap

By Nel Cabrera

STEPPING UP RHETORIC ON THE expected outcome of his P4-billion plunder case, detained ex-President Joseph Estrada yesterday dismissed as "overkill" the government's plan to deploy some 6,000 armed personnel at Metro Manila on the day the sandiganbayan court hands down its decision.

"If people do come out in the streets during the promulgation of the verdict, it will probably be to celebrate with me as I regain my freedom," the popular actor-turned-politician said in a statement issued by his party, Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

The exact day of the verdict has not been set by the Sandiganbayan but it is expected to be on or before Sept. 15, the end of the prescribed 90-day period within which it should decide the case from the time it was submitted for decision last June 15.

Why would people protest an acquittal, asked Erap, who believes "I am innocent of these charges?" continued the 70-year-old Estrada.

"This is a clear case of overkill—how can the administration justify deploying 6,000 troops to secure the Sandiganbayan while sending a very small contingent to help our government troops in (war-torn) Basilan," Estrada chided.

Government had said there were no plans anticipated to affect by-conviction supporters. Some officials are wary of a repeat of the May 1, 2001 riots triggered by Estrada's ouster in 2001.

Cagayan de Oro Rep. Rufus Rodriguez, acting as Estrada's spokesman, said in the PMP statement that the former president who was ousted in 2001 "has no interest in reclaiming power or running for any public office once he is declared innocent."

"All he seeks at this point is justice, for himself and for the more than 10 million Filipinos who voted him into office in 2004," Rodriguez said.

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Marcos crony agrees to deal, but bank won't

By Jerry Esplanada

A GOLF CRONY OF THE LATE dictator Ferdinand Marcos has volunteered to enter into a compromise deal with the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), the agency tasked to recover the ill-gotten wealth of Marcos, his close relatives and associates.

Andres V. Gozalo Jr. has also expressed willingness to fully disclose his assets, including those sequestered by the government in 1986, according to PCGG commissioner for litigation Nicasio Conti.

Gozalo, who is now in his 70s and is currently based in Redwood City, is the main respondent of PCGG Civil Case No. 4, filed in 1986 by then chair Jovito Salonga and others remains pending with the Sandiganbayan.

Conti noted, however, that there was a big problem in the government's case involving Gozalo.

Not cooperative

He said the Bank of Commerce (Boncommerce), the term blocking assets to at least 22 United States dollar and peso accounts under the names of Gozalo and his wife Ludivina.

In a July 27 letter to PCGG chair Camilo Sabio, Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera said Bol "(despite repeated directives from the Sandiganbayan, [Boncommerce] ... refused to comply in toto) up with its audited consolidating statements of fresh accounts in the name of Andres and Ludivina Gozalo."

The PCGG has sought the help of the central bank's Monetary Board and the Anti-Money Laundering Council, Devanadera said.

Conti said the AMLC and the central bank can bring pressure on Boncommerce, "under pain of administrative and criminal sanctions, to provide information on the [Gozalo bank accounts] which remains uncontested by."

Devanadera said that even if the offense was committed long before the passage of the Anti-Money Laundering law, the act of concealing the funds "is a continuing offense that is subject to investigation by the AMLC."

The Boncommerce accounts are estimated to be worth "more or less half a billion pesos," said lawyer Jay Ronick Ramos Lance Miguel, director of the PCGG legal department.

The accounts had originated from the Gozalos' Towers branch of the Traders Bank on Reyes Blvd., Manila. They were absorbed into the Bank of Commerce following the merger of the two banks in 2005.

Gozalo's accounts "should have been automatically transferred to Boncommerce but the bank makes it appear they are not with them," Miguel said.

Mr. Gozalo himself had requested for an update on the outstanding balance of the accounts," Bol Boncommerce has yet to act favorable on his request, he said.

Full disclosure of the existence of the Gozalo accounts would be the latest step in a possible compromise agreement with the PCGG, Devanadera said in her letter to the PCGG.

According to the charges in civil case No. 4, Gozalo was the recipient of funds illegally obtained by Marcos.

It said Gozalo "acted as the dummy, nominee and agent of the Marcoses in channeling and receiving commissions, bribes, kickbacks and other improper payments or considerations from persons or corporations entering into contracts with the government."

Gozalo also allegedly "misled government financial and banking institutions of millions of pesos through loans, guarantees and other financial accommodations without any or with grossly insufficient collaterals."

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No strangers on int'l day for 'desaparecidos'

From page A1

the reality. They are daughters—not young enough to miss a mother's long or costly of a father's advice—who suddenly realize one day in a different role to portray and chores to endure for their families.

Aborted review for bar exams

"I don't cry in public but I really try not to cry at all because there are too many things that I have to attend to and it's hard being a mother to a many," Mae Wan told the Inquirer on Sunday night.

In the beginning, she thought she had it all figured out.

She would take the review course at the University of the Philippines College of Law in Diliman, study hard and take the bar exams—three days from now.

But barely a day in Manila, she immediately returned to her hometown when she was told she had taken in a test message. The last time she saw her 53-year-old mother was at the gate....the day before the "abduction"—sending her off to Manila.

"There were no signs that it will be the last time together. I've been in Manila frequently and she has always seen me off," Mae Wan said.

On the day she returned home, she assumed full responsibility of the household and of her 13-year-old sister with help from some relatives. (Her father, a Bayan Muna member, rarely goes home for security measures.)

Filing in the gaping hole

"If this is the way for me...it's not easier for my younger sister who is at the phase of her life where emotion is needed the most," she said.

With her minimal experience of taking care of an adolescent, she entered past the day-to-day struggles of filling in the gaping hole their mother had left unwittingly.

In between activities and campaigns to search for her mother and relatives—Alih—Isabel, who was with her in the van during the incident...she managed to borrow through her law books and review materials to prepare herself for the bar exams.

"I am no longer expecting to pass it. But I am taking it anyway," she said matter of factly.

WOMEN DESPERATELY SEEKING LOVED ONES: Edita Burgos leads mothers and other relatives of the "desaparecidos" in a Mass for the enforced disappearance at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani on Wednesday. AP/RICHARD VOGEL

Though canceled at UP, the despised bar review classes also pushed because her search for her mother has taken up all her time.

Along with some relatives, she made the rounds in her province, gathering evidence, filing appropriate cases in affidavits, talking to people and relaying them to her mother's plight.

'Mother needs me more'

"Sometimes it is so frustrating when people don't listen to me during our campaign activities. But I have to endure it with patience and determination because this is the time when my mother needs me most," she said.

But she has no time to weep because every moment wasted could spell the difference between life and death for her mother, she said.

May Wan might have given up hope on the upcoming international bar exam on the thought that one day her mother will come home to resume the order of things in their household. Intern in her latest adventures and numerous visits there again, she said.

"I don't want to let go of that hope ... if I lose that belief that she is still alive, I don't think I have any reason to live, too," she admitted.

Prepared for worst

Lorena, an only child, has also been building on to that same hope since her father disappeared.

As a member of human rights group Karapatan, she assisted mothers and fathers, siblings or children in their search for their missing loved ones. It somehow prepared her for her "worst fear."

"I used to music there but now I am one of them," she told the Inquirer.

Lorena said she grew up not seeing her father all the time, but they were really close that she could tell him everything—about her dreams, friends, plans and even heartaches.

"Every month's second that month but at least I knew he was out there somewhere. But now, I don't see him and I don't even know where he is," she said urging away tears.

Others in her host linked to the Bagong group in its attempt to overthrow the Arroyo administration in 2005.

It is said only she flew to Cagayan de Oro City and visited the place where her father was "abducted" to gather evidence and retrieve her father's pair of eyeglasses, which witnesses said, fell when he tried to break loose from his abductors.

"The eyeglasses had to be a "sentimental journey," she said. "I never found the eyeglasses. I learned that a witness found it in the dirt and turned it over to a member of the media. It is supposedly in the hands of the police now."

Aside from the unimaginable events her father might be going through now, the thought of him not being able to see clearly broke her heart too.

Lorena took several months after her father was missing to finally come out to the open and ask help from the public. "Knowing Tatay's status, being branded as the enemy of the state, I also feared for my life. I could be next. But if I don't take risks, who will search for him?" she said.

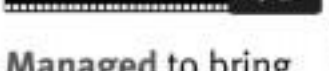
Last month, she drifted from one hospital to another in search of her father. Months in search of clues. But the only thing she got from military officers were mere denials, she lamented.

Helping others good enough

"I don't know where I get my strength. I just get through the day looking for him, hoping to find a certain clue that might lead me to him," she said.

But if all else would fail in the end, Lorena said she would just take comfort in the belief of a Higher—whom her father also a desaparecido...that helping others find their loved ones was tantamount to securing their missing fathers, too.

"My friend said if we succeed in finding other people's missing loved ones, it would be like we have found ours too," she said.



Art docs work on 4 'dying' ...

From page A1

it, they would collapse sooner or later," said Pilita Clemente, a painting conservator from the National Museum.

The priceless oil paintings by Juvenal Sanso, a master wayang from Angono, Rizal, depicted the different periods in the history of Philippine liberation—from the precolonial period, all throughout the Spanish and American era, up to the Japanese era.

They are currently undergoing their third restoration through a P38,600 ($1,739) grant from US Ambassador Grace Kennedy's fund for cultural preservation.

Kennedy said the embassy chose to fund the project because the paintings represented a "great partnership" between the two countries.

Particularly special

"The one's particularly special—a National Artist, an historic building ... one that provides great service to the people," said Kennedy.

One of the murals, referred to as "No. 3," featured foreign doctors vaccinating ailing Filipinos during the American colonial period.

Around $300,000 has been spent by the US government in the Philippines for its cultural projects for the last five years, Kennedy said.

She also said that the embassy would soon finance conservation efforts on the secret famous Damong ng Maria Makiling.

Others have threatened to strike out the star fields carved out of "manunuluyan" from the list of the world's seamless unless rebuilding efforts are undertaken soon.

Kennedy said the huge financial assistance for the restoration of the Boxing murals was over "helpful" because all the materials and chemicals needed for the process were costly and imported.

Expensive technology

"Restoration is a science, and now we can use more advanced technology in restoring the murals, but it is of course expensive," he said.

The team of six conservators and technicians began work on the prime exhibit murals in October 2006, but aside from their huge sizes (296.5 cm x 205 cm each), Sanso said cleaning was the "hardest part."

"We can't overclean. The chemical cleaning is painstakingly thorough ... we even have to test the chemicals we use," he said.

An assessment report on the paintings found that dirt and other residues permeated the paint layers, and that there were numerous minor breaks of "blisters, bulging and cracking," aside from "abrasions and cuts" ranging from minute to palm size.

The murals were restored twice before—first in 1974 by Fred Torres Incorporated, through the GF Medical Mission Society, Malacañang Presidential Museum and PCH, and the second in 1995, also by Bernardo and the UP Medicine Class of 1996.

Cracks and holes

An inspection of the fabric lining used to cover the back of the paintings showed cracks and holes, or grave signs of "weakening."

Two of the murals that need major restoration will undergo a complicated series of steps, including gelatin-based cleaning, cleaning from scratches, mechanical cleaning, relamination and application of preventive facing papers.

The two other murals which require less work will undergo physical cleaning, chemical cleaning and stabilization.

Aside from grime, Bernardo blamed the "fluctuating temperature" for the rapid deterioration of the murals, which were originally displayed on the lobby walls without any chemical protection.

Right temperature

"The right temperature is +/- 21 degree Celsius, while the humidity should be at +/- 60°C. If it's too hot, it will dry the canvas. The people who pass by the area increase the humidity, and the paintings will absorb this heat," he said.

As restoration progresses Bernardo said conservation efforts will be undertaken after the restoration to prolong the lives of the precious murals, but they will not be taken out of the lobby so everyone who enters the hospital will still get a glimpse of the paintings.

Temporary glass coverings and special lighting will soon be installed to prevent the murals from any kind of physical contact, other to reinstallation, or that in time, the fleeting murals need not be taken to the "intensive care room."

NOW YOU SEE IT . . .
The full moon emerges from darkness in this series of pictures of the lunar eclipse. The photos were taken early Tuesday night in the clear skies of Bonifacio T. Liwanag, Zamboanga, Sibuguey in Metro Manila and elsewhere, clouds blocked the spectacular view.

Lapus: NCAE a huge success

By Jerry E. Esplanada

EDUCATION SECRETARY JESLI A. LAPUS has described as a "huge success" last Tuesday's holding of the National Career Assessment Examinations or NCAE.

"Reports from all regions nationwide showed large turnouts despite earlier threats of a boycott by militant students," Lapus said yesterday, citing reports reaching the Department of Education's main office in Pasig City.

Even so-called "diploma" and Muslim relief institutions" like the Islamic governance of Basilan reported huge student turnouts.

Last week, high school seniors belonging to the militant League of Filipino Students and Kadtabaan threatened to boycott the tests.

Their threats, however, turned out to be a "dud," said DepEd officials.

'Black Duke' visits Manila

By Cynthia D. Balana

A WARSHIP WITH THE SHORT NUMBER of Britain's former is the Royal Fleet is in Manila this week to conduct joint military training exercises with the Philippine Navy, focusing on maritime security.

HMS Monmouth, a Type 23 Duke class frigate with nearly 200 officers and crew, is on a global deployment of about nine months to a number of talks on major strategic partners. It is also scheduled to visit Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Japan, and Singapore.

Speaking after his arrival in Manila, Commanding Officer Tim Peacock, the ship captain and commander of the Royal Navy said HMS Monmouth is one of the largest Royal Navy ships to ever visit Manila in many years.

Peacock said the visit "underlines the continuing importance of the Philippine-British military and strategic partnership."

He said: "I look forward to meeting the new secretary of defense and other senior members of the Philippine Armed Forces."

Peacock said he hoped HMS Monmouth, affectionately call the Black Duke, would undertake some maneuvers with the Philippine Navy before leaving for Philippines.

Welcoming HMS Monmouth was British Ambassador Peter Beckingham who said the visit gave an opportunity to re-enforce the close strategic interests of the Philippines and the United Kingdom, and to review training which has been provided by the UK to the Philippine Navy.

The ship's program included meetings with senior defense and government officials by Peacock of the Royal Navy, as well as a call on Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, August 30, 2007
A Call to Work in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: 1 Thes 5:1-11
Gospel: Matthew 24:42-51

Jesus said to his disciples, "Stay awake, then, for you do not know on what day your Lord will come. Just think about this: if the owner of the house knew that the thief would come by night around a certain hour, he would stay awake to prevent his house to be broken into. So be alert, for the Son of Man will come at the hour you least expect.

"Imagine a capable servant whom his master has put in charge of his household to give them food at the proper time. Fortunate indeed is that servant whom his master will find at work when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will entrust to that one with everything he has.

"But as with the bad servant who thinks 'My master is delayed,' and he begins ill-treating his fellow servants while eating and drinking with drunkards. But his master will come on the day he does not know and at the hour he least expects. He will dismiss that servant and deal with him as with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Commentary:

Paul expresses his gratitude to the Thessalonians for all they have done for him and his fellow preachers and missionaries. They standing firm in the Lord gives them hope. They are prepared for the day of the Lord, whether it comes by night or by day. Paul may have his theme to see them face to face and that God the Father will light the way to them. It is a prayer that we can say often, for all the groups in our churches, in our nations, and the entire world that we may cling to the same hope and become holy—all of us.

We are to be prepared always, as servants awaiting the master's return. The last of these is entrusted as will his household and to the priest, lord to them to tend, the bread of life, reconciliation, justice, peace, mercy. How we treat one another will be the basis of Jesus, the Son of Man's, judgment upon us. Are we good, faithful, and watchful servants so that no one in the household lacks or wants for anything?

Claretian Publications, Inc., 9 Broccoli St., UP Ph. 1101, Diliman, Quezon City, P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City, Tel.: 921-5966, Fax: 921-7426, E-mail: publications@claretian.org, Website: http://www.claretian.org. Claretian Publications is http://www.claretian.org Claretian. We treasure to the Philippines.

NPA attacks feared; AFP goes on red alert

By Christine O. Avendaño and DJ Yap

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines went on red alert yesterday to thwart retaliatory attacks from communist rebels following the arrest of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison in the Netherlands on suspicion of ordering two of his former associates killed.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., AFP chief of staff, said there was no indication that the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), would launch major attacks but stressed the need for the military to be prepared just the same.

"We have no intelligence [on the imminent] attacks but we are on the cautious side rather than be sorry later," Esperon told reporters in a phone interview.

A red alert requires all military personnel and units to be monitored to ramp and on standby alert.

The 7,000-strong NPA has been waging a Maoist rebellion against the government since 1969. It is classified as a foreign terrorist organization by the United States and the European Union.

Esperon said the military would be ready for a visit in Malaysia.

The more cause after Dutch police on Sunday arrested Sison, the CPP founding chair, for illegal fund-raising orders from his residence in the Netherlands to have two of his former associates killed.

The two were Arturo Tabara and Romulo Kintanar...who had split with Sison's CPP-NPA for ideological reasons...were gunned down in separate gangstyle assaults in 2003 and 2006.

In Hilsbersburg, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said the AFP and police cop brass know full well that enemies of the state would always take advantage of the situation.

"We are monitoring this kind of scenario and we are prepared," he said.

The chief of the AFP National Capital Region Command (NCRCOM), Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, said he requested the 16th to launch patrols in Metro Manila to protect the arrest of Sison.

As expected, militant groups sympathetic to the plight of Sison sought to express their indignation over his arrest at the Dutch Embassy yesterday in Makati City. However, they could only fly as far as the Ninoy Aquino statue.

Dozens of members of Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, AnakPawis, among other groups, stopped on Ayala Avenue at 10:30 a.m., intending to march to the Dutch Embassy, but were blocked by police at the corner of Ayala and Paseo de Roxas Avenue.

But a few of some 50 policemen blocked their path, forcing the demonstrators to stage their protest in front of the Ninoy statue at the corner of Ayala and Paseo de Roxas. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and GMA7 Cebu reporter Jo

Dutch envoy: There's basis to bring Joma to justice

From page A1

Kintanar and Tabara File their cases in the Netherlands where Sison has been living in self-exile for 20 years.

But Gonzales said foreign Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said that in the absence of an extradition treaty with the Netherlands, the Philippine government would wait for the Dutch resolution of Sison's double murder case before moving to seek his return to the country.

Seguis refused to comment on reports that the Philippine government had a hand in the arrest of Sison.

"I think it obviously a Philippine issue but as you know the NPA [Sison People's Army, armed wing of the CPP] is on our foreign terror organizations...so I commend the Philippines for continuing to try to keep its people safe and going after terrorists," Kenney said.

"So you know the United States and the European Union and other countries have all listed the NPA as a terrorist group ... we work very hard to prevent terrorist groups from getting financing and all our citizens safe," she said.

Dutch Penal Code

On PTV 4's "InterOyanya" program, Verma said: "I should stress that we are looking here at a Dutch criminal investigation by the competent Dutch authorities leading to the arrest on Sunday. That is one being brought against Mr. Sison on the basis of the Dutch Penal Code."

"It is indeed a situation wherein charges are being brought against Mr. Sison on the basis of Dutch law. So, that is the case. The case is indeed there is a basis in Dutch law to bring charges against Sison," he said.

Verma said he was not authorized and was not supposed to comment on the substantive part of the charges, only on what was mentioned in the press statement.

Court hearing tomorrow

He said that Sison would be brought to the court in The Hague tomorrow for a remand hearing.

Under Dutch law, authorities have three to six days from the arrest to present the accused to the court so the judge will then decide on whether Dutch is a need to extend the detention for another 14 days.

If extended, a group of judges will decide after the 14-day period whether there is a need to extend it for a maximum of 90 days. After the 90-day period, the prosecution of the case in the court begins.

Criminal investigation

"But I'd like to stress again that this is a Dutch criminal proceedings. Regardless of implications, it is the national prosecutor's office, an independent office in our system, that has decided to bring these charges against Mr. Sison after a long period during which a criminal investigation was conducted by the Dutch authorities," he said.

Verma stressed that there was no extradition treaty between the Philippines and The Netherlands, only a prescription treaty and tradition in practice.

He also said that the principle of nationality and duality did not come into play at all in the Sison case. Dutch nationality is the privilege of immunity from its full law enforcement enjoyed by a Dutch citizen in another country.

The Philippine Embassy would provide Sison assistance, including visits and the help of a lawyer, should he ask for one, Seguis said at the press conference.

Major breakthrough

In a statement, Foreign Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Sison's arrest "is a major breakthrough in the quest for peace and justice shared by millions of Filipinos."

"The administration seeks an end to decades of armed struggle that has kept many areas of the country underdeveloped and, consequently, impoverished. Joma Sison has much to answer for, and now the truth shall be known about atrocities committed in his behalf by those who stubbornly cling to an outdated and discredited ideology," Bunye said.

At the press conference, Gonzales said the Dutch authorities would try to establish that Sison was the CPP chair who ordered the killing of Leticia Ledesma in the Philippines. He said Sison had been denying that he was the CPP chair even if the whole country knew about it.

"It's Armando Liwanag. Armando Guerrero and Joma Sison are the same person." He knew it because Guerrero and Sison always arrived separately, he said. In CPP anniversary and documents, Armando Liwanag is mentioned as the CPP chair.

Year-long process

He said the arrest had been in the works for a year but the Dutch authorities had asked for confidentiality.

If asked by Dutch authorities, the Philippine government would provide the evidence, he said.

Dutch prosecutors asked for help before, according to Gonzales.

Dutch police came over and sought assistance from the International Police section of the National Bureau of Investigation to locate witnesses.

"They made several visits to the Philippines. They have interviewed a lot of possible witnesses in the case. This has been going on for many months," he said.

Case files, forensic evidence

At the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame, Director General Avelino Razon and Dutch authorities were in the country two years ago. Razon said the PNP furnished the Dutch with case files related to Sison's case, including documentary evidence consisting of statements and forensic evidence.

"Our evidence is strong and even meets the standards of the Netherlands authorities. In their assessment, there is a probable cause," Razon told reporters.

He said Dutch authorities started to process the case against Sison in January 2006 and ended in July 2007. "That's how long their process is."

Razon said the PNP was willing to send police investigators to the Netherlands to testify against Sison if needed.

Freedom slip

Gonzales could not keep his elation over Sison's arrest.

"What I know is that it is against the Dutch law to order a murder in their soil. That's why I'm very excited. Sorry ...Period, no slip," he said. Heehee.

Gonzales said the case had nothing to do with the peace talks.

"Of course, Joma is claiming to be a consultant to the peace process. That's well and good but let us not use the peace process as a shield to order the rape, murder and...How subtitled cherry on [Page A1.]

Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza said the government would determine the effect of the arrest on the peace talks with the communist leadership of Jose Maria Sison, which bogged down since August 2004. With a report from Allison W. Lopez

NDF warns arrest to end peace talks, orders more strikes

From page A1

security's communist leadership ordered the guerrilla New People's Army (NPA) to strike more severe blows in government forces.

All units of the New People's Army are tasked to continue carrying out tactical offensives nationwide in order to intensify the people's war [and bring it] to a new and higher level," the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) said in an e-mail announcement.

The reactions followed the arrest of Sison in the Netherlands the other day on suspicion of ordering the murder of two former allies in the Philippines.

The NDF is an umbrella group of various underground organizations, including the CPP and its military wing, the NPA. The 7,000-strong rebel army has been waging a Maoist rebellion since 1969.

"The arrest of Professor Sison and the raids conducted on NDF offices in the Netherlands) are bound to terminate the ongoing peace negotiations between the [NDF] and the Arroyo government," NDF monitoring committee chair Fidel Agcaoili said in the statement.

Sison's European lawyers are preparing to question Sison's arrest and save him from a long detention for a non-bailable crime.

"The European lawyers have described the incident as a politically-based persecution," Jose Diaka, legal consultant for Sison's wife, Julie, the communist said that "at around 9:30 a.m., the Dutch police in plainclothes ... broke down the front door" of the Sisons' residence without even bothering to knock, and ransacked the house.

The (Joka) was reportedly asked to sit in one corner of their house while the police carried away their computers, documents, CDs, and other files. The search lasted until early evening," the committee said.

Jams 'tricked'

It claimed the police also tricked Sison to get him in custody.

It said Sison was arrested when he reported to the Utrecht police after getting an invitation from them supposedly in connection with a new information on a complaint he filed in 2005.

Citing accounts from a lawyer who accompanied Sison to the police station, the committee said that Sison was told by police that he was not under arrest but was merely being invited for questioning.

"Contrarily, the European lawyers will question the legality of the arrest," Diaka said.

Sison, 68, is set to appear before a Hague court on Friday, August 31, for the police to get a pre-trial detention that could last from three days to 104 days, according to Diaka.

Breaking down doors

The Netherlands barred International Solidarity Committee gave details of what it said was the "fourtape-style" arrest of Sison in the Dutch city of Utrecht.

The committee is an international solidarity group composed of Filipinos, Dutch, Belgians and other nationalities campaigning for the removal of Sison, the CPP and the NPA from the terror lists in Europe and the United States.

Citing information from Sison's wife, Julie, the committee said that "at around 9:30 a.m., the Dutch police in plainclothes ... broke down the front door" of the Sisons' residence without even bothering to knock, and ransacked the house.

The (Julie

Tañada not part of KL 'junket'

REP. LORENZO TAÑADA III OF Quezon clarified yesterday that he was not part of the delegation of Speaker Jose de Venecia who went to a "junket" to Malaysia last week.

In a press statement, Tañada said he was on an official mission to Kuala Lumpur to attend the Asian Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (ahhpcm) for democracy in Burma. He said that contrary to reports, he travelled in economy class and did not receive $300 per diem. He added that it was the AIPMC, not the House of Representatives, which paid for his ticket.

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DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
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NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEP'S)

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PHILAS FAIRY TRAVEL, INC.		
PHILAS FAIRY TRAVEL, INC.		
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CONNECTAL INC.		
CONNECTAL INC.		
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The DOLE-NCR will hold a Regional Consultation and Action Planning on August 31, 2007 where employers/companies and other groups can make their participation. You may call 5384010, 5384020 for more details.

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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **LUFTHANSA TECHNIK (PHILS.), INC. (LTP)** with plant site at the Mactan Area – Special Economic Zone (MA-SEZ) has filed with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) an application for **PIONEER STATUS** to be granted to its Aircraft Overhaul based on newness of activity and technology, which if approved, will entitle the company to six (6) years of income Tax Holiday. Said application has been officially accepted and is under process in this office.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above mentioned application may file with the PEZA his/her objections in writing and under oath, within fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication.

Please direct your position papers/comments to the Enterprise Regulations Department of PEZA (Tel. Nos. 551-8544, and telefax 551-3486).

(Sgd.) **LILIA B. DE LIMA**
Director General

DOTC ready to defend $329-M national broadband network project

By Rina T. Olchondra

THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION and Communications (DOTC) said it was ready to defend the national broadband network (NBN) project in any court.

"If this matter is investigated by the House, I suppose that also be made a required reading of the members of the House," Padilla said.

Abalos laughed off the allegation that he was the Comelec official who served as a conduit between the government and ZTE to seal the NBN deal.

On the phrase, he was full of words as he said: "I feel flattered. I didn't know I am that influential."

Abalos said he could not imagine himself as someone who could influence members of the Cabinet like Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Trade Secretary Peter Favila and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Wishful thinking?

Abalos also heartily laughed when he said he "vanished" he could be the person, who was mentioned in the newspaper column as someone with the "unusual presence" to handle two women in one day.

"That would make my wife very happy. You know, I am not as ill-advised by these allegations. It's really laughable. One [person] in the morning, and another in the evening?" he said, chuckling.

"It is only if I am already 73, why would I do that?" he added.

Ready to face probe

Nonetheless, Abalos said he would have whatever investigation Padilla or the House of Representatives would initiate.

On April 21, 2003, which was covered by the election period during which no government contract should be signed, Mendoza and Ye Fang, ZTE vice president, inked the $329-million deal in ceremonies witnessed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in Boao, China.

Asked if the ZTE contract was legal even if it was signed in the height of the election campaign, Abalos said it would have to be looked into.

"We can't immediately say if it's illegal or not because we don't even know if that is just an understanding or a contract. We have to see it first," he said.

Two other companies—Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI) and US-based Avrasya—came up with proposals of $340 million and $320 million, respectively, to undertake the NBN project.

Padilla said the Philippine Area AHI submitted an unsolicited bid under the Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Law to the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) but the offer was set aside "despite the fact that under the BOT Law, the agency concerned is mandated to evaluate the BOT proposal within a fixed period."

E-Procurement Law violated

Padilla said the E-Procurement Law was also violated because the award in favor of ZTE failed to go through an "honest-to-goodness" bidding process.

"There was no competition, no fight, nothing. How would have requested that the Filipino people will get the most of the taxes they are always concerned to weigh up," he said.

Padilla said the representative of AHI, which proposed to undertake the NBN through the BOT scheme, was asked to withdraw its unsolicited proposal to the DOTC.

Unofficial trips

Padilla said that weeks before the ZTE-NBN deal was signed, Abalos secretly unofficially to China.

"According to sources, ZTE Corp. paid for the hotel accommodations of Abalos. It was then unclear why Abalos was traveling to China, why he was doing so unofficially, and why ZTE Corp. was apparently sponsoring his trips," the lawmaker said in his speech.

"He several unconfirmed reports that Chairman Abalos was also seen playing golf with officials of ZTE at a golf club in Mandaluyong City and in Shenzen, China. Obviously, this was more than a mere coincidence," he added.

Padilla said Assistant Secretary Lorenzo Formoso III of the DOTC made up the story about the ZTE-NBN contract getting lost with other other agreements signed in China.

He said Formoso made the claim before a round-table discussion at the Eastern Professional School in Makati City.

"Probably taken aback by the reaction of those present ... Formoso almost immediately declared that there was no need to worry. He promised to make available copies of the unsubmitted personnel agreement," the lawmaker said.

Contrary statements

Contrary to Formoso's announcements, Padilla said Presidential Legal Adviser Sergio Apostol said the NBN project would not push through because there was no contract.

Abalos, for his part, also said that what was signed in Boao was a memorandum of understanding (MOU) and not a contract with ZTE.

"The day after Apostol's statement stated Mendoza and Formoso in an interview with the bayanan pantalik sinabi kasi of Perlas and Opposition] when they declared that no MOU and supply contract with regard in the NBN deal, in fact, been executed between the government and ZTE," Padilla said.

Padilla noted that Mendoza and Formoso earlier said that the contract had been executed.

"Mr. Mendoza and Mr. Formoso lied. The Department of Justice reviewed the transactions on the agreements," Padilla said.

Abalos may have played key role in NBN deal

Turn to page A2

Padilla cited a column by Artemio Bengzon in the Philippine Star on an unnamed election official who reportedly negotiated the NBN deal while he played golf and had sex with women in Shenzhen.

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Senate votes to reopen 'Garci'; probe by 3 committees

Turn to page A2

"The three committee chairs will meet on Monday to set the rules and schedule of hearings.

"This is a product of ping-pong diplomacy because it transferred [the probe] from Ping [Sen. Padilla Lacson] to Pong [Enrile]," said Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who has maintained the opposition's stand to play the fiscal role during the probe.

Lacson earlier initiated the revival of the investigation by introducing yesterday by 7:30p.m. Vidal Doble on the authenticity of the tape, expected the hearings to start next week.

"My original proposal was to carry this in Blaster's committee," said Lacson.

But the sponsor of the resolution seeking Supreme Court intervention to stop the playing of the Garci tape at the hearings remained a possibility as administration senators continued to back the probe.

"We will oppose any attempt to play any part of the Hello Garci tape in the hearings," said Sen. Miguel Zubiri.

Consensus was reached

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, who warned that the resolution could violate the Anti-Wiretapping Law, said that the decision was a consensus of the entire Senate.

Only Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and she jailed Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV were absent during the caucus.

Enrile refused to say whether it was a tactical victory for the administration since the confrontation on the Garci tape had been averted to another day that confined to only three committees.

"It would not look good for the Senate to be seen as to direct confrontation with the Executive," said Enrile, who added that the compromise would ensure that the Senate's work would not be hampered.

Electoral fraud

Cayetano contended that the opposition agreed to tackle the issue at the joint committee level rather than as a whole in order to avoid a confrontation with the administration.

"Anyway, all we wanted to do is to ensure the Hello Garci probe. With the inclusion of the committee on electoral reforms, we are sure that the electoral fraud would be included," said Cayetano.

But Gordon claimed that while electoral fraud could be covered, the senator's could not use the Garci tape as evidence.

Santiago, who left before the caucus began, said that senators should discuss the issue among themselves to avoid a constitutional deadlock.

"I hope that we would not be led to a deadend by this agreement among us senators. I hope we could just reach a compromise," said Santiago.

She bagged off from attending the caucus because she was feeling under the weather.

Don't impose restrictions

Santiago said that the hearing should only tackle wiretapping by the military and not the contents of the Hello Garci tape.

Pimentel said that if a case was filed with the Supreme Court, the Hello Garci hearings could be delayed by at least 30 days, which is why he would dissipate public interest in the case.

Both Pimentel and Lacson were adamant that the Garci tape be played.

"We cannot impose restrictions as committees, they cannot investigate with their hands tied, they should use all means at their disposal to dig the truth," said Lacson.

Bishops fail to heal split of 2 'Couples'; members confused

Turn to page A2

closed-door meeting of top officials of the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

Reyes spoke to CBCP News, the bishops' official publication whose report was posted on the CBCP website. Confirmation of the breakup of the CFC, which has more than a million members in 140 countries, was reported on the website.

Present in the meeting were CBCP President and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Bishop Ramon Villena of Boyombong, Dulbuinos Alaba of Bacolod City and Honesto Ongtioco, S.J. of Malolos, along with Reyes.

CFC said its splinter group Couples for Christ for Family and Life, were represented by their respective heads, Jose Eric and Frank Padilla. Padilla is one of the co-founders of CFC, established in 1981.

Jesuscon Medina, who headed the CFC's Couples for Living program formed Balinga that reportedly was the root cause of the split, was absent. Last year, IAO program to build a nation without shame won for Medina and the organization the Ramon Magsaysay award—Asia's version of the Nobel Prize—for community leadership.

The 53-year-old Medina has been plagued the 4th, telling the bayanan over the weekend, "we are working more, talking less."

Why Padilla resigned

Eric became director of the CFC's council of elders after Padilla resigned in February reportedly because of the consternation of the group's ethics committee over his EE, only one of CFC's several ministries.

Reyes, who also heads the CBCP Episcopal Commission on the Laity, said that Eric will look into allegations that CFC "is veering away from the canonization statements of the Couples for Christ and several preachings of the Catholic Church."

CFC defended

But the Antipolo bishop defended CFC's links with government and other religious, saying that "there is nothing wrong" with these linkups as long as these are "guided by the Catholic Church's rules on communion."

Reyes said the Couples for Christ for Family and Life led by Padilla "is now recognized as a diocesan private association of the faithful in the Diocese of Antipolo." He said Padilla's group may go into other dioceses with the permission of the bishop of the place.

"It is for the bishop to decide whether to accept one or both in his area," Reyes told CBCP News.

In interviews conducted by the bayanan, household heads in a Quezon City parish who directly handle members' couples said it was not easy to choose whether to join the CFC, which still supports EE, or Padilla's CFC for Family and Life.

Fears for the grass roots

They spoke on the impasse on restitution of anonymity to avoid starting a rift at the CFC's grass-roots level.

"Who will be their caretaker? As members of CFC, we are committed to them. We cannot just leave them behind," said one household leader, who has been with the CFC for 14 years.

The household heads expressed their observations that CFC has apparently veered away from its original thrust of evangelizing the poor.

"People know about General Ratings as just building houses for the poor. But the truth is, the program is more than just about the homes. What's important is the change in the lives of the people, improving their lives and their spirituality, helping them regain their self-respect," one of them said.

Evangelization remains thrust

The household heads said that under the OK program, CFC members would go to the depressed communities—most of the time knowing not a single soul—and try to evangelize.

"You try to change their ways little by little. You start by cleaning the streets, fixing their surroundings. At first, these people would just stare at you. Then they will help. Then you will see them start drinking inside their houses, instead of outside, and the children would learn how to 'mano' and be courteous to their elders. Only then would we start building the houses," they said.

Moreover, they said, as OK and Mission gained popularity, CFC was left behind.

Less members

The household heads noted that the CFC has been getting less membership, and they attribute it to the "dilution" of the group's evangelization program.

"There's been suggestions that we go back to the basics because we have been focusing too much on our social ministries and programs. It has grown too big. They [CFC leaders] let more than they could chew," one said.

The household heads' concern over the households they are handling, as they try to divide their members from the controversy-hit three couples, especially those whose faith could "avoid" be disorientated with the thrust of the Catholic lay organization.

One of the household heads said he had stopped his group's prayer meetings because he cannot to prevent it from having to choose between the two CFC groups without a proper explanation from the elders.

In a letter to CFC members dated July 12, Reyes had warned that the division within the CFC would affect its parishes and dioceses.

The household heads said they are disappointed with the fact that the CFC's "spiritual fathers" are the ones in the middle of the fight.

Power grab?

They said to them, there appeared to be a "power grab" within the CFC after some elders ignored the advice of the bishops—Reyes, Lagdameo, and Bishop Broderick Pabillo, who was said to represent Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, to seek a "win-win" situation and resolve the conflict.

Instead, one group went ahead with the election of the council of new elders, led by Eric, last June 22, three days before the CFC's 25th anniversary, they said.

"A leader should not only have ambition, but also the ability to sacrifice for the sake of his members. He must also show obedience to the bishops," the household heads said.

But because their commitment is to strengthen the lure of Catholic faithful, the household heads say it would not matter to them whatever group they decide to join.

They remain hopeful that there would be light at the end of the tunnel.

'Queen of Mean' leaves $12M to dog

Turn to page A2

from the late luxury hoteller and real estate billionaire's estate.

Helmsley left her beloved white bichon, named Trouble, a US$12 million trust fund, according to her will, which was made public Tuesday in Manhattan.

She also left millions for her brother, Alvin Rosenthal, who was named in court for Trouble in her absence, as well as two of four grandchildren from her late son Jay Panzer—as long as they visit their dog in person at least once each calendar year.

Multiple millionaire

Otherwise, she wrote, neither would get a penny of the US$5 million she left for each.

Leona Helmsley left nothing to two of Jay Panzer's other children—Craig and Morgan Panzer—for "reasons that are known to them," she wrote.

But no one made any better than Trouble, who once appeared in ads for the Helmsley Hotels, and lived up to her name by biting a housekeeper.

"I divest that white dog, Trouble, then, her remains shall be buried next to my remains in the Helmsley mausoleum," Helmsley wrote in her will.

$3M for tomb

The mausoleum, she ordered, must be "marbled or stone-cleaned at least once a year." She left behind US$3 million for the upkeep of her final resting place in Westchester County, where she is buried with her husband, Harry Helmsley.

She also left her chauffeur, Nicholas Colon, US$10,000.

She ordered that cash from sales of the Helmsley's residences and belongings, reported to be worth billions, be split and that the money be given to the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

Her longtime spokesperson, Howard Rubenstein, had no comment.

Helmsley died on her 87th month at her Connecticut home. She became known as a symbol of 1980s greed and earned the nickname "the Queen of Mean" after her 1989 indictment and subsequent conviction for tax evasion. One employee had quoted her as snarling, "Only the little people pay taxes."

Imelda wants to go to China

IT SEEMS FORMER FIRST LADY IMELDA Marcos has never lost her appeal to political VIPs abroad.

The widow of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos has been invited by the governor of Abra Province, China to grace the third Northern Asia investment and Trade Expo which will open on Sept. 2 in Bin capital, Changchun.

And Mrs Marcos has taken the proposition as an opportunity to seek clearances by electronic mail (mail.yahoo.com) in China and Hong Kong for her eyes and knee problems.

In a "very urgent" message, she asked through her assistant, Rodero Alcon, the Bangsamoro Public Devisions to grant her a two-week travel pass beginning Friday to attend the affair and she her doctors as well.

Marcos is being tried for 16 graft cases in connection to her alleged misappropriation of supposed five Marcos dictator Ferdinand Marcos believed to have been used to hide $950 million of ill-gotten wealth from 1966 to 1971.

—Jonathan E. Uy

In the Light of Truth

The Grail Message by Abd-ru-shin

"In the Light of Truth", the Grail Message, is a classic work that offers clear and perceptive answers to questions which challenge every human being. Written by a German author between the years 1921 – 1938, it is a collection of 168 essays addressing all spheres of life ranging from God and the Universe to the Laws of Creation. It answers eternal questions such as:

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What is the purpose of life on Earth ?

What happens to "me" when I die ?

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To perceive the values within the simplicity and unswerving logic of the Grail Message, no specific type of education is required. Age, sex, race and religious background present no barriers, unless they are self-imposed. However, reading the Grail Message requires an open mind and a seeking spirit.

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Treat to Quit.

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VOL. XXXVI, NO. 207

INQUIRER

OPINION

Murphy's deal

WITH THE ZTE DEAL, EVERYTHING THAT CAN go wrong has gone wrong. In its any mistake, if the lurid reports ultimately prove accurate, that a Commission on Elections official was actually involved in the deal?

The Comelec should have nothing to do with the ambitious but fatally flawed plan to construct a National Broadband Network—unless, that is, previous participation in another ambitious but fatally flawed computerization contract (think Mega Pacific) was a prerequisite. But, if the reports are accurate, the luring of the election official to lobby for the contract was a masterstroke of cynicism: during an election period, the influence of election commissioners is second to none.

As it is, the entire NBN scandal has all the hallmarks of a Comelec project under the chairmanship of Benjamin Abalos.

Like the infamous claim of Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol, the scandal involves stolen documents. To be sure, the ZTE deal wasn't the only such contract stolen in Boao, China last April; hours after it was signed in the presence of President Macapagal-Arroyo. At least five other contracts were lifted, too. But like Bedol, officials of the Department of Transportation and Communication waited an inordinately long time to report the alleged theft.

The scandal also features clueless government officials, in the mold of Abalos himself. The President's chief lawyer, Sergio Apostol, announced that there was, in fact, no contract. Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, whose department will manage the network, kept a troubled if embarrassed silence. And the Department of Justice ruled that the contract between ZTE and the Philippine government was valid—without, however, actually seeing a copy of the contract.

Like the Maguindanao recount, the scandal is marked by a thorough lack of transparency. The contract for the network mysteriously ballooned in the course of a few months, ending as a $330-million project. In the process, the competitive and in fact superior bids of two other companies were virtually ignored.

Above all, and like Abalos' oft-repeated claims of his commitment to clean and honest elections, the scandal involves a betrayal of the project's very objective. Instead of an infusion of foreign capital to produce a heartening network, we will get the opposite: an unnecessary and expensive debt for government infrastructure, paid for by Filipino taxpayers.

Last March, officials of ZTE, described in news releases done as China's largest listed telecommunications equipment provider, pledged (together with officials of another Chinese company) to invest heavily in the Philippines. "Officials of Pioneer Metals Group of Companies based in China and Hong Kong and ZTE Corp. ... told President Macapagal-Arroyo in separate calls in Malacañang of their intentions to invest here ..."

The nature of investment, however, has been siezed on its head. A few days ago, the Philippine government took out a loan from China's Import Export Bank, including a $400-million allocation for the National Broadband Network. What does this mean? It means ZTE is not in fact investing in the Philippines; it has bamboozled the Philippine government into taking out a loan from the Chinese government to fund ZTE's "investment."

Surely this "investment" is not what the President and her economic officials had in mind, when they discussed the need for a "privately funded government broadband network" in November 2006, and resolved that "the government connectivity and infrastructure should be developed at no cost, and with savings, to the national government."

For those at similar reasons, Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla has filed graft charges against Mendoza, two of his assistant secretaries, and at least four officials of ZTE, for violating anti-graft and government procurement laws. "The officials I have charged are liable for misleading the public and executing this anomalous contract and should be punished accordingly," Padilla said.

Let's hope Murphy's law, as work in this controversial deal at every stage, does not extend to the prosecution of Padilla's case.

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Talk back

VIEWPOINT

Jean L. Mercado

RANKER INJECTED TO "VIEWPOINT" COLumns on our Latin American like sports and beats in economic performance, water policy and home (home) judgement. Here are some comments:

"Your comparison of the Philippines with Latin America (read: increasing," Brazilian Ambassador Carlos Sena means. The solution "Tough crisis," published last Aug. 1, presents oil Investment of Mexico's president, Robert Ismael's study on the Philippines' child from and 3250 years sooner to surrender today. Use this news from similar cultural parents with Latin America" is asked.

A second Inbasa paper, reported in "Dreamgrow pushed" last Aug. 15, discussed how Japan and the Philippines need separate ways from a more common-sensing point after World War II.

"Here has been growing around 7 percent yearly for many years," Sena stressed. "Argentina could have been growing a yearly 8 percent since 2003. And the per capita income of Mexico is around $7,500. And Brazil is the 10th (largest) economy of the world with a GDP that exceeds $1 trillion. There are many other success stories in Latin America."

Indeed, these growth rates are true, I responded. "But Brazil's financial mortality rate for every 100,000 population is 4.0. Compare that to Thailand's 4.6. Argentina's life expectancy at 74.8, is higher than the Philippines' 71—at Cuba and Nicaragua. But both are below Hong Kong's 81.5. And infant mortality rate in Brazil, also, is 33 per 1,000 births, just fractionally better than the Philippines'. Both are very behind South Korea's 5. Above all, life is the determinator which all other hopes begin."

"But, it is true, all Latinamerica have trees, that some Latin American economies, including Peru and Argentina, have been growing in the 6 to 8 percent range for the past three or four years," Herbert wrote. "This does not include Brazil, by the way."

"This has been an unexpected and surprisingly good economic performance," Herbert added. "Interestingly enough, the same thoughts that crossed in my head—& made me rather excited again!—."

And again: "When I try to raise my thoughts on Peronism...there is such convincing empirical evidence that it makes it seem there is no time to reflect—so One can afford I can delay—no, no Sire, Mister."

That is incredible writing (pain and despair pouring out of every jagged line. Kind of reminds me of the great Colombian Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the Latin star (more with than less faith, direct, revealing. But who by struggling to do the stories doing in a social/economic unknown, by presenting to do the right thing in a world gone topsy-turvy to right and wrong, end up becoming the very organizers, the very embodiments, of hate, division and cheating.

I don't know that Mother Teresa isn't all the more marvelous, or miraculous, for it. I agree totally with Rev. Richard McBrien who says, "Her own deficiency enhance her reputation as a saintly person with people who aren't really interested with pious matters." Certainly, this "new" Mother Teresa has infinitely more lessons to impart to us Filipinos, a profoundly deeply rich legacy of people whose enlightenment has always been a little suspect. It says in the very least that people who do not suffer a crisis of faith do not really have much faith to suffer from.

But was Mother Teresa's religious or not not merely mechanically mingled? Her own really felt or believed or are not really full of faith? One can really make a case for our religiously being largely mechanic: You go to Mass, you take the sacraments, you follow the rituals, you do good, you visit the Vatican and kiss the Pope's ring, and you are saved. Sometimes reading that you once ago, the town used to convey in small provincial businesses that they operate. And large 'our readers were officially dissolved."

Gamelia Rawanis agrees that disaster looms for Cebu, given "reckless mining of the city's coastal, limited supplies," issued in "Resort at for us, dunes" last Aug. 28. "To advantage of the project to channel surface water, from Cascajo rivers, due to heavy Typhoon in August," Rawanis adds. "Because water doesn't never has no orders South Reclamation Project."

Water shortages bubble monitoring of Omnibus 1887 law. But "I'm not privy to what makes the mayor go ballistic. But it's a decision to even water on an inflated measure," critiqued of "scarcity ratio." Inconsistent note there is a "market blind spot for water"—depletion doesn't show up in national accounts. So, there it no early warning system. And only when ratio crisis goes over city's wells do officials wake up.

"Through acts of commission and omission, policy can reduce further stress on resources like water," observes the IDS paper, "Building Aquifers: Who Pays the Price?" Inconsistencies today are "coming down to water resources. So, they haven't given access to be inherited by future governments." To put it more bluntly: they are as if they have no grandchildren.

The column "Benefiting the trouble" last April 5 should have included "Traders by the Street per are discouraged by the Dominican and Public" Supreme Business areas from Malapascua, Nueva Ecijanes; in 2005, the COA found the big operation in Mexico Centre with P1,264,058.05; Roque Alano Jr., P1,614,686.86; Moises Pacumalang, P962,196.00; Emilio Espinosa Jr., 806,404.45; Hermilando Mandanas, P747,777.80; and Rufino Mexico, P723, 396.00.

"Can we afford these humanely?" Rawanis asked.

* * *

E-mail: jeanlmercado@gmail.com

Saint

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A FRIEND OF MINE FROM ALMOST A LIFE time ago, a poet and a priest, stunned me the dilemma of priesthood, or indeed of religion in general. In a poem he wrote, he said, Christ was the "initial moment at Mass when the Host holds up the host and chalice and proclaims to believers they are the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Except that in this case, the priest who does it is neither the miracle nor the host or not. The moment stretches to ordinary and takes on the aspect of an age-old battle between angels and demons.

I asked my friend if that had really happened to him or to someone he knew. He laughed and said it happened all the time, to priests and nuns above all because they're the ones who are forced to confront their faith in an unequivocal fusion. He merely chose the moment of the consecration in his poem for dramatic effect, but most priests, like most faithful, are raised to doubt at some point in their lives. They have their dark nights of the soul. They have to wrestle with their faith, or the right to give up everything—or at least attend to, the part pertaining to celibacy and poverty not always being fulfilled—for nothing.

Faith, said my friend rather wisely, is the tension between the need to believe and the need to be completely certain there is a God, and you will never be completely convinced there isn't one. You truly make a leap or plunge in faith. Pure doubt and sheer certainty, you believe. Or choose to believe.

I remember that conversation after reading that truly breathtaking, or sure inspiring, news report about Mother Teresa, contrary to her image as walking with God on her side all her life, privy to Jesus's bedding hesitations but sure of it. In letters that she wrote to friends, she cried out the most agonized cries, like the shrieking of the wind in the desert: "Where is my faith—even deep down right in there is nothing but emptiness and darkness—my God...how painful is this continuous pain. I have no faith...I dare not utter the words & thoughts that crowd in my head—& make me suffer untold agony...."

And again: "When I try to raise my thoughts to Heaven...there is such convincing emptiness [void, I think, I meant—and there is no One in silence]—so [No—in effect] I can delay—no, no Sire, Mister."

That is incredible writing (pain and despair pouring out of every jagged line. Kind of reminds me of the great Colombian Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the Latin star (more with than less faith, direct, revealing. But who by struggling to do the stories doing in a social/economic unknown, by presenting to do the right thing in a world gone topsy-turvy to right and wrong, end up becoming the very organizers, the very embodiments, of hate, division and cheating.

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Joma arrest demoralizes Left

THE ARREST OF COMMUNIST BOSS OF THE Philippines founding chair Jose Maria Sison is a severe blow to the Left. Sison's detention (in the midst of the New People's Army and its urban organizations and allies, During the past many months, leftist groups have gone to some measures to show the military's attempts to railroad killings on leftist activists, for now those hitherto is beginning to end by his/her government of having ordered the murder of two leftist activists, Rolando Elizalde and Armin Tabara, some years ago. Sison's arrest, however, could also be used to justify his detention, whose office was also raided, is scheduled to be indicted tomorrow in The Hague and will still follow their, since the Philippines has no extradition treaty with the Netherlands.

Leftist militants immediately charged the foreign administration of pressuring Dutch authorities to arrest him, but this doesn't wash. Recall that the government has been pressuring other countries in the European Union for its failure to arrest suspected killings, so it's difficult to see how it could "influence" or "pressure" the EU countries on the arrest. Besides, Sison's arrest warrant has been in place since the Dutch authorities arrest on prior lengths to investigate the soldiers' charges and decided that they were unconvinced.

It's interesting that Joma's arrest came as a relief to those the police suddenly produced three supposed NPA witnesses who claim to have first-hand knowledge about how the NPA allegedly abducted Jonas Burgos. Timing or coincidence? Whatever is the truth, it's quite relieve's to Indignation that a certain Jonas Burgos have been carrying out the same planned killings.

* * *

The nation awoke to the Sandiganbayan ordering on the face of the new President Joseph Estrada in the plunder case against him. It's not clear when the decision would be handed down, but one thing's sure: there's no indication that a conviction will provoke widespread protests. Experts say that almost P50 million a day is needed to whip up big crowds, and at first this can be gathered from only two days by Estrada or Nikkoi Mactar Jejomar Binay, said to be the opposition's main financier.

Political Tidbits

Rolando Olivares-Constantino

The same lack of interest could attend the new Enrile hearings at the Senate with senator Vidal Tobias. This is because he appears to be thoroughly discredited in the eyes of the people. He's even said his admission that he had accepted P2 million from Estrada's nemesis, Lucio Tan, requires no produce that tape, or that he sold a copy to former NBI deputy director Samuel Ong. Mukhal Raja. Tendaw "Teddyboy" Locsin Jr. has said that Tobias "is Gen2's conscience" and he's surprised. Enrileno should be the first to be called as a possible instigator of the wiretapping. He said that one person who would like to see this happen would be former Sen. Ted Boiser.

* * *

It took of 241 resolutions from all over Luzon Intl a city in central mate but from Aug. 8 to 12 as the 3rd illegalized multi-day One Town, One Product (OTOP) program of the Department of Trade and Industry. The fair, which was opened by Dar Pres. Gloria Mallo Lacuna and classified Presidential Management Staff chief Cerge Tinsiano, showcased some of the finest wood, marine and handicraft handmade, mainstream products, food stuffs, fresh fruits and vegetables, fish, wines, etc. of Luzon. Many persons felt that the products this year were superior to those of last year. Trade Undersecretary for the present Operations Cotton Cruz Enriquillez, who oversees the program, said that year's fair exceeded the happy traditions more P.75.145 million, a 30 percent increase over last year's P4.9 million in sales. With OTOP pushing by former and former presidents each year and greater publicity, bigger increases in the years were not be expected from succeeding years. Dolindo is CITE.

* * *

The "news" Price Czar-bonnet Jose Miguel Arroyo made his media debut last Friday at a press conference before, presumably, guests and dressed in Filipino's best outfit, the Barong Tagalog, created by his son, Dinapuna Boy. Mikey Arroyo. "PG" looked slim and healthy and in front 10 years younger and more relaxed than he has been since his heart surgery. "Dear's tell GMA, his mom especially. Lab," he said, adding that his daughter is his advisor in something arts. Erin, he recalled, was his wife's favorite name, but he chose it, since Erin is at that moment he had no idea how hard his confidant was. He later learned that his kids and even his personal physician, Dr. Julio Cayco-Cervantes, were getting through the long night, but GMA remained calm and composed. He mentioned two "miracles," brought by the healing priest from Canada, Fr. Peter Gumbleton, who is staying with Cardinal Sin's Hospital. Dr. Rommel Cardin, found a small vein through which blood could be fed in his brain while the tear in his aorta was being repaired, and the revival of his kidney.

* * *

Arroyo admitted that his doctors had advised him to drop the libel cases against some media people, but he said he will not do so. "I may take it back if I do." He also revealed life-saving meals regular entry weekly therapy at St. Luke's and daily 30 minutes on the treadmill at the Palace, and he formerly returned to his golf at Greenhills Country Club. He plans to join GMA on her state visit to Madrid in late November for which he insisted he won't need to bring a driver, though he would need seven months.

PG said that he would run in several provinces, among them frustrating the medical studies of 40 students at UP-PGH and Pamantasan ng Maynila, earning up a wellness and therapy center in Pasay City, Laguna. Are people in jail GMA on her state visit to Madrid in late November for which he insisted he won't need to bring a driver, though he would need seven months.

PG said that he would run in several provinces, among them frustrating the medical studies of 40 students at UP-PGH and Pamantasan ng Maynila, earning up a wellness and therapy center in Pasay City, Laguna. Are people in jail for life and voting funds to enable a regional team led by Dr. Carlito to operate on those who have free to life. Sir, I am helping to raise funds for the Philippine Olympic team which he plans to join in Beijing.

Iconoclast, PG.

Heroes on my mind

Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

LIKE TINA TURNER SCREAMED, "WE DON'T need another hero-to." But another dead one, anyway.

But this month is for heroes, both the dead and the undead. And so we, the undead, had another round of the so-called "holiday weekenders" workweek. The newly dead are having their day, they are among us so, hugging the headlines. Their turn, sage: "It is the soldiers." Their flag-draped coffins, their widows looking sanctified before our eyes in very cinematic ways.

I play "Tapa" in my mind and salute proudly.

Strangely photogenic indeed are scenes of the heroes dead being brought to their waiting places. Something about the electric, cheap light bulb movies have unforgettable images of them. But even more awesome are the real-life scenes, choreographed processions, funeral dirge, tolling bells, and the sound of the guns saluting one by one one Chanda an and only one man Hinay ex. spin inside and grenades.

Terrifying are the funeral marches that cry to the heavens for vengeance, with protesters that, in the midst of their bravado is a sea of grieving, raging humanity.

And heart-breaking are the ones held intact in arches of stretched objects a few. Like Anne. Like the one of our little guide to the unbelievable objects of bombs and "the bread" with rebels and ships with armed women in a bus heading with land grenades and other deadly weapons. (That was many years ago, OK?) Soldiers caught up with his own. And so on. And so on. The soldiers we love, some who could slip away. A little candle in a dark, cruel room was all he had, and a short sweeping, pointing to the cage marks on his brother's cheek.

Heroes, dead and undead, are everywhere. And the documentary and filmmakers have a way of turning the actual things into cinematic moments that are hard to forget. How does one portray them hard to forget, in words and with music so that we will not forget? And how to do justice to the story of the lost and save the sorrows of the grief?

I became infatuated by the matter of the documentary "Bonnie Killian" directed by Sara Mugunza.

Although, while it depicted the intensity of the military crackdown on those who opposed martial rule, it also showed the hardships four soldiers who were killed by bombs in civilian clothes.

There was this scene of purchased bodies of soldiers being loaded into trucks...in slow-mo, with Ishmael's choral music "Bye Bye Corpse" swelling in the background. "Salamat-lamat pa-bon-tot..." It was unbearable, but unbearably beautiful and images drawn from the devastating aftermaths of Filipino killing Filipinos, and Filipinos from two sides.

What the hero who the citizen? Ask the Greek philosopher who asked the question.

This long-ago-since-last-hole coming back from pain bloody wrecks that not soldiers getting killed by the bombs in the borderlands of Basilan and Jolo, some of whom attended by the same medics.

And speaking of another breed of heroes, silent volunteers, the overseas Filipino workers, mothers-supporting a war-ravaged army of a young nation's teenagers, didn't have to come here to be "at their point of flesh. The outrage caused by their condescending and insulting words ("from Bahrain to Greece") was cut and leather enough for the insensitive to feel what has erupted.

The heroic good intentions of Filipino societies as well as good values should have prevented anyone from expressing in public such unbelievable thoughts or from not thinking that they are all wrong, or unacceptable. But the gathering early in foreign lands so that those they left behind would live in safety.

Tomorrow, Aug. 31, Belise Bonoan "Pepe" Mabini, founder of the Center for Migrant Rights, will be conferred the Mother Teresa Awards for the All Asia in a time of gratuitous and whose project for life continues to fear. Rest in the trees of the west, the last and the best.

Tomorrow, too, the 100th birth anniversary of the late President Ramon Magsaysay, whose demise will join the ranks of Asia's greats as the decades in different categories.

We are not wanting in heroes. It's just that the media [illegible] thoughts on the larger stage as the garish theories of the rich, famous and physically endowed. The quiet heroism of many remains unrecognized for a long time until it is discovered.

The Bill Gates Foundation (BMGF) has made such fruitful partnerships with the poor in fighting against women and their who have contributed much in making this planet a great place to be. There are now eight initiatives of Tuberculosis, Malaria, Polio, Nutrition, Family Planning, Hunger, Emergency Response and Financial Services. The BMGF since four years ago and I am happy to say I have received a good number of the stories in the books. BMAF received the eighth winning partnership, with the four's narratives present.

The partnership among groups of students on their chosen home grants have also been published.

For an even much younger group in the 28-book series for children, Illustrated, of course. It is a gift of the Gates Foundation through Bill Gates Sr. and Melinda Gates Foundation Bantayog Ng Mga Bayani also wanted to launched the book on the contemporary heroes and martyrs who have died in the past few years in the dark years of martial rule. I personally know a good number of them. And by the way, today is International Day of the Disappeared.

There is no shortage, poor August—saints, typhoons, disasters, fires, eclipses, rebel deaths, martyrdom, the climate change. And the birth and beginning of things endless and amazing. Ah, the August-born Leos of this planet, among who's patron saint, Jerome, is followed with the smells of the universe, revel in them.

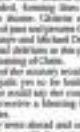
* * *

Send feedback to mcdoyo@info.com.ph

Bluffing

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III



KIRAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO AND MIRIAM Gordon are prepared to go to the Supreme Court to ask for a TRO. That is, if the Commission on Elections keeps playing to the farces. The unthinkable happened last subpoenaed four colleagues, thus they'd be liable for violating RA 6260, the anti-wiretapping law, if they did carry out.

But why just a TRO? If it's unthinkable the playing of the tapes, she said, "the Senate would be in certain, big contempt to a crime." Unnothing? It seems the Senate, as usual, wants to have its cake and eat it too. Gordon says, with Santiago, "to the tapes and Gordon into meeting to the Supreme Court demanding we just a TRO, but the arena of every senator who refused to leave the session hall at this point. Or perhaps, says one who indicated Gordon's assistance, could restrain Lacson to the ground, perform a citizen's arrest, clamp suspect who subpoenaed to the head and to the Senator's mace, marching up the Supreme Court steps.

Then the Court would have to decide if Santiago and Gordon are right or wrong. If wrong, then Santiago et al. can look for other means to continue their investigation, or they can resign. If the Court upholds her, it justifies the arrest of the Senate's four Senators Like Lapid and Tony Sotto, to name two, because, as Santiago would be the first to remind, ignorance of the law excuses no one). Having most of the Senate in jail would surely lead to dancing in the streets. The jailed senators, starting with Pimentel, Escudero and Ramon Revilla, would then proceed to the Court to order the arrest of the membership of the House of Representatives in the 13th Congress.

The congressmen, upon being hauled off to jail on arrest order there would be massive public celebrations, complete with fireworks and the release of Philippine media (in which point we would see the blanket of all Holiday Economic link in). Media would proceed to the arena of every newspaper subscriber, TV viewer, radio listener, blogger and blog reader, by being a party to the same crime with which they're being charged. Some starving might willingly line up to be jailed, forming lines that would put "Resurrection" to shame. Chinese would then petition for the release of jailed employees, and an official like Ignacio Bunyi and Michael Defensor, said the unlawful jail and childcare in this point would be like the Second Coming of Christ.

As the detainees would be in jail, the Senate would be in jail, or wanting to fill jails yes to be built. At which point, the President would say the country has really started to, and convene a blessing from Cardinal Rosales and Pastor Apostol.

This is, if anyone really were dead and called Santiago's bluff, which no one will. So, seriously folks...

Santiago pointed out that our Bill of Rights says the privacy of communication is "inviolable" except if authorized by the courts, or when "public safety and order requires otherwise as prescribed by law." Public safety and order? Read midnight for any purpose in any proceeding."

But Juan Senior Sixth helpfully pointed out what is provided by the Anti-Wiretapping Law, which is the specific piece of legislation applicable to the Lacson tapes. There is a chapter prohibiting wiretapping unless one of ensemble obtained from wiretapping, by any parties, without the exception for specific offenses. These exceptions, to be availed of by law enforcement officers, are kidnapping for ransom, violations of the Revised Penal Code, espionage, or in the middle of an illegal wiretapping, as in the middle of an illegal wiretapping, as in the middle of an illegal wiretapping, as

Oh no, not again!

LETTERS

"I HAVE A PEACE TO WIN" GLORIA MACAPAGAL Arroyo declared, at the same time unveiling the "three-E hate, politics of destruction." (Inquirer, 8/23/07)

What did she mean? (She made the statement in reaction to Sen. Panfilo Lacson's call for a broader unity against the Reilly-Janet rapes.) That there is a law that deprives the public of the right to know the truth? What if the interrupted conversation would reveal the real mastermind of Ninoy Aquino's assassination?

Some people are using the law in a wrong way. Laws are made to uphold people's rights, not to deprive people of those rights.

We just want to know the truth. We don't want another "unopened envelope." That's the problem with the people in power; they are fond of withholding the truth.

—EDELADIC rmdc@yahoo.com

Gaps in Evangelista's column on overpopulation

REBECCA EVANGELISTA PRICE IN THE INQUIRER's Sept. 28 issue felt a number of gaps that need to be filled. I hope she will not mind giving help.

1. Doña Juana's family of 22 has children from its original 20; we never a typical Filipino family in my time. The National Statistics Office (NSO) says married Filipino couples today produce an average of 3.3 children. And the rate continues to decline.

2. We are never 88 million all together, as Rex pins it out. An estimated 8.2 million to 12 million work overseas. "Her gone economic multitudes," they total $12 billion to $15 billion every year. The monthly out-migration rate continues to rise.

3. A balooning birth rate? The government says it's 2.36 percent, but international monitoring agencies say it's 1.9 percent to 1.99 percent. Outside of Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog, where the economic woes are pushing it below three-tenths, and the ARMM, where religious plays a dominant role, the average growth rate, says the NSO, is 1.9 percent. But people are living longer, so the total is not climbing despite the declining rate, reminds.

4. Overpopulated? Vast tracts of land all over the country are underutilized, idle and unproductive, while metro Manila and the urban centers are congested. Is this overpopulation or maldistribution? Are people the problem, or is it government?

Many countries that have "overcrowded" themselves to negative birth rates are now trying, in reverse their population policies, to no avail. The threat of the aging economies like Japan's and Germany's is very real.

Should these women have the right and choice to decide on their reproductive health? Should they be given the means to exercise that choice? Should they be empowered to do so? Should they be allowed to do so? Should they be encouraged to do so? Should they be supported to do so? Should they be protected to do so? Should they be respected to do so? Should they be valued to do so? Should they be loved to do so? Should they be cherished to do so? Should they be honored to do so? Should they be revered to do so? Should they be worshipped to do so? Should they be adored to do so? Should they be idolized to do so? Should they be glorified to do so? Should they be exalted to do so? Should they be magnified to do so? Should they be sanctified to do so? Should they be consecrated to do so? Should they be dedicated to do so? Should they be devoted to do so? Should they be committed to do so? Should they be pledged to do so? Should they be vowed to do so? Should they be promised to do so? Should they be sworn to do so? Should they be bound to do so? Should they be obligated to do so? Should they be required to do so? Should they be compelled to do so? Should they be forced to do so? Should they be coerced to do so? Should they be pressured to do so? Should they be urged

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Gov't loses ₱2M daily to oil smuggling

By Aridon Joaquin
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT ZONE—THE GOVERNMENT is losing P2.2 million daily to oil smuggling. In the last seven months, it lost a total of P470 million.

This was revealed on Wednesday by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Administrator Armand Arreza, who said that about volume of imported oil products that [illegible] whereas declared based on official BMBE and Bureau of Customs audit report 127 million liters of oil are unliquidated," he said.

"Meaning, what we know is that, [illegible] they have an inventory of about 33 million liters of oil, where are the others?" he asked.

Arreza said the SBMA audit of the companies was done unusually under a customs administrative order.

In the case of the locator, the SBMA received an advance report from the BoC showing that it only paid P28 million in taxes, he said.

Measly sum

From receipt of this report, he said the SBMA worked back to see if the company could buy some 150 million liters.

"That is when we conducted a full scale audit and we've seen several discrepancies. So Antonio Bautista [head of the Nonfederal Anti-Smuggling Group] filed cases against them," Arreza said, during a press briefing in Mabayuhan.

"When a truck loaded oil at the tank farm and went out of Subic that is smuggling. Isn't it? If they have not paid any taxes, that is smuggling," he said.

He also said 5,498 trucks loaded at the tank farm in a span of seven months.

12 million liters

"How could that be? How did that happen?" he asked.

Arreza said material balances reconciliation from the company managing the tank farm showed that in December last year, 314 trucks loaded 12 million liters of diesel.

Officials of the SBMA locator claimed in their liquidation report that they sold two million liters in Subic International Autozone, a vehicle importer here in Subic, according to Arreza.

He said they wrote All in one firm, MA replied that it "did not purchase any diesel fuel or gasoline" from the Subic locator.

He said the SBMA audit has placed the volume of unliquidated oil at 126 million liters.

"At P1.30 in target/duty, the figure would reach P472 million," he said. "And if there is an element of fraud, you multiply that amount by eight to penalty and that would reach [illegible]."

Arreza said the SBMA has suspended the importation of the Subic locator and withheld its inventory of 12 million liters of diesel worth P1.7 billion in a safekeeping here.

Smuggling hazes

"The SBMA is withholding the inventory precisely because if the company is found to have defrauded the government and fails to pay P1 billion, then in such a[n] official government," he said.

Hilari's task force was also investigating the smuggling of cars through the Subic and Clark economic zones.

Several luxury vehicles and sports utility vehicles that were believed smuggled through Subic were destroyed recently in a move that the government hoped would discourage smuggling.

WAR TOY
Children play around an armored personnel carrier in Kalinga. The military and police in northern provinces were put on high alert for communist attacks following the arrest of communist leader Jose Ma. Sison in The Netherlands on murder charges.

Gov't alloting ₱10B for jatropha planting

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—THE government is setting aside more than P10 billion for the cultivation of *Jatropha curcas* in northern Mindanao as an alternative source of clean fuel.

Gilda Ilet, president of the Land Bank of the Philippines, said during Monday's forum with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malaybalay, Bukidnon that the funds would be tapped out to rural farmers of jatropha.

Tulalag hosts a demo farm for jatropha cultivation.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources said it allocated P2.2 billion for reforestation of barren, idle or cultivated lands that would be used for jatropha production.

Mr. Arroyo said the government's support for jatropha cultivation was also part of its reforestation program.

"I am used to [a] realistic solo-oriented [to a] man-to-man [basis], then we [can] demonstrate that income can be derived from trees. The green version of the gulf rush is only possible if people square two planting as placing time deposit with short maturity and [short] yield," he said.

The rising prices of oil in the world market have prompted the government to find alternative sources that can be developed. These included fuel additives from sugarcane and jatropha.

Bukidnon Gov. Jose Zubiri said that in the province alone, at least 60,000 hectares of land could be used for jatropha planting.

Philippine National Oil Co.'s alternative Fuels Corp. said that in Mindanao, at least 1,000 hectares is needed to feed the cultivation of the plant.

AFC officials announced that a jatropha processing plant would be built in the Dolefil Estates in Tupi[illegible], Misamis Oriental, in 2008.

The plant, they said, would produce at least 1 million tons of biodiesel. Ma. Cecilia Rodriguez, inquirer Mindanao

2 priests reunite for bid on 'activism' in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Roman Catholic Church's unusual duo—activist priest Robert Reyes and opus-turned governor Eddie Panlilio—reunited here on Wednesday for another joint endeavor: Activism with renewed governance.

Standing next to a five-foot tall image of the Our Lady of Miraculous Medal, Reyes, 52, and Panlilio, 53, embraced light and pleasantries, and shared laughter before going into a dialogue on what Reyes called his grassroots-type engagement in Pampanga.

CATHOLIC priest Robert Reyes and priest-governor Eddie Panlilio on Joseph Hall floor, upon resuming as Panlilio's office in Pampanga.

"Ang bahay ay bahay namin (The woman is our lover)," Reyes said of the Blessed Virgin Mary from standing at the capitol's lobby Panlilio bowed his head in agreement.

Together on the way to the governor's office, seven steps away, the image, a gift from Seamstress Center Texas.

Reyes, 53, is a priest, great-grandaughter of Fr. Mariano Gomez, one of the three martyrs of secular Filipinism. She's elder sister to Fr. Antonio Lewis, the first Filipino native of the San Jose Seminary of the Society of Jesus.

Panlilio resigned his P38,436 salary commensurate from one of her P5,800 monthly pension as a spouse of a World War II veteran.

Perla's granddaughter, Phoeb Jirk, 32, said she believed that the "Blessed Virgin Mary really wanted to give Father Ed."

The image did not leave a benefactor's mold. Perla Bautista is six-day leave from a teaching stint in China, some over the weekend to "provide [to recipients] through and guidance toward promoting a regime of peace and prosperity to the province."

Reyes said Perla's aim was what the Pampanga journey was about.

To help to Panlilio's campaign for good governance, his campaign public during the May 14 elections, Nalisd ng Pag-asa [Total of Hope] was going to manifest its contribution through "presence, ongoing dialogue, discerning process, sacrifice by having for Panlilio every Wednesday, each taking, personal and sectoral structure, solidarity with campaign and vision, and service, timely and effective advocacy," Reyes said.

Habang Pag-asa was a spin-off of Bayan 40-day fast at the People's Power Monument on Ortigas Avenue during the first impeachment bid against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I will be away but I will always keep in touch with him. I will be at his back and call," he said, referring to Panlilio.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Doc finds new life caring for elderly

By Ronnie B. Perez
San Pedro, Laguna

MINGLING WITH WELL-HEELED personalities comes naturally to Dr. Mercedes "Chedi" Oliver, an obstetrician-gynecologist and resident of Ayala Village in Alabang, who has served patients in such medical institutions as the Makati Medical Center, St. Luke's Medical Center and the Asian Hospital.

A member of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Medicine Class '77, Dr. Chedi, as she is fondly called, has also been involved in the real estate business, venturing into building houses for the rich.

By a strange quirk of fate, however, she found herself performing tasks she was not used to when she was involved in building the Mary Mother of Mercy Home for the Elderly and the Abandoned (MMMHEA), or simply the Home. These duties consist of caring for the sick, elderly, handicapped, filthy poor and abandoned.

Being a physician and only daughter taking care of her elderly mother in Ayala Alabang, Dr. Chedi was only too aware of the difficulty of caring for the elderly the sick and the abandoned. Her mother died a few years ago under her care and closest friends.

The supernaturalist-doctor said "putting up a home for the elderly, the sickly and the abandoned was neither among my plans nor my dreams." She said it was not easy to engage in an apostolate she had no knowledge of and to serve people she did not know.

"With God-himself planning and tending the seed of service in my heart, however, I just found myself working away hand-in-hand the apostolate, giving no thought of my material return for the time and resources I was investing in," Dr. Chedi added.

She was later convinced that her involvement "is the work of the Holy Spirit—it is the finger of God that points and guides me in this apostolate."

DR. MERCEDES "Chedi" Oliver

'Putting up a home for the elderly, the sickly and the abandoned was neither among my plans nor my dreams'

THE COMPOUND where the chapel and the quarters of the Mary Mother of Mercy Home for Elderly and the Abandoned reside are located. PHOTO COURTESY OF R. PEREZ

Ward

With help from other people, Dr. Chedi has taken care of 127 persons from all over the country.

The oldest of them is Remedios Lopez, 86, a former public school teacher in Iloilo. Manila. She was married and had a son who died early. When her husband died and she could no longer manage, she found her case among her relatives is too care of her while her savings were used up for her hospital expenses.

Another resident is Domingo Tapales, 84, of Columbares. He said his wife lived for seven years with their in-laws. But when his wife died, his relationship with his in-laws turned sour until he was compelled to leave and wander without direction. Tragedy struck when he was run over by a vehicle, which caused the amputation of his left leg.

Two blind homeless—Mang Amy and Abuel (Ling Montebon)—were the third men and helped him get admitted to the Home.

Another ward is Felicidad Castillo, 71, of Aloa, who was found hugging in the eleven of Pharmaceuticals City. She remains secluded in the ground floor with her to a previous stroke.

Rosario elderly occupants of the Home, who could not remember some details of their lives include Isabel Medalla, 1[illegible] Magpayo, 71; Socorro de Leon, 80; Ramon Bolisalo, 85; Pilar Ayala, 94; Teresita Calvo, 66.

Beginnings

Dr. Chedi said the apostolate began when the Institut chose to distribute "Pusong" Pamalakaya whose dream was to build a home for the elderly, the sick and the abandoned in San Pedro, Laguna.

"Without my knowing of it, 'It Pusong's dream was already growing inside my heart and I was already imbibing the desire of service to the less fortunate members of our society. Still, when 'It Pusong could no longer pursue her dream because of old age and his assets ran out, I found myself the unprepared and hesitant worker in the vineyard of the Lord," she confessed.

The Home started operations in 2004 in a most unlikely location—the office of Everlasting Memorial Park, which is owned by Dr. Chedi.

At the start, Brothers Anthony Jose Bautista and Angel de Pablo of the Blessed Sacrament Missionary of the Poor cared for seven male wind persons in the small office until a more suitable and permanent site could be found.

In 1999, the Home was relocated to the care of a third woman—Brian, Mother of Mercy—under whose name and patronage the apostolate was formally set up as a foundation. In 1996, it broke ground for a new house on a 1,565-square meter lot donated by Dr. Chedi in San Pedro.

The house was completed in 2007 with funding almost totally provided by the foundation's members.

Mission

The MMMHEA has a mission of "service to the sickly, wretched, forgotten and abandoned elderly in the name of the society." Its mission "is communal that nurtures and nourishes the body and soul of our member flock those who cannot and those living outside, fostering a group of God's people who help each other [illegible]."

Barrios, Dr. Pablo and the seven ward members received into the Home in 1998.

Later, the management was relinquished to a lay person, Lily Abandonido, in 2008 up to 2016, who, with a co-worker, cared for the increasing number of ward members. That time, the Home started to admit female wards.

In 2003, a chapel, connected to the Home by a snug tent built. The Adoration Convent of Divine Mercy or the Dark Sisters of Tagaytay donated to old tabernacle to the new chapel.

In the same year, donor from the Sisters of Mary took over the management. In 2005, Sister Rosita Bautista, Superior of the Missionary Sisters of St. Francis Xavier headed to Sister Imelda then Sister Filomena came.

At present, there were from the group communicants their lives, care and understanding to the old, cranky, unreasonable and sometimes ungrateful residents. They have established a healthy relationship between caregivers who are now doing so the job requiring with the old-road patients.

But the foundations, saying for the sake, the elderly and the abandoned reasons not only of housing, feeding and clothing the less privileged but also helping them to understand and accept the mercy of God amid their afflictions and to entrust their earthly years and very death to the time once that God.

In this, the support of religious communities and of many priests in the parishes across San Pedro has not been wanting.

Gone

To date, 27 of the elderly ward members have died and were buried in the Everlasting Peace Memorial Park. With these gones properly identified by marble markers, they have been moved from the lot of other abandoned people who die in the streets and usually buried anonymously in paupers' graves in public.

Many times, 127 of them, have come to and gone from the Home, some have been found and rescued with their kin.

Others have been transferred to other health and social service institutions. Still others have gone back to the streets, feeling that they were already strong enough to try it on their own.

Marinduque regales guests with traditional 'putong'

By Gerald Gem B. Querubin
Boac, Marinduque

PEOPLE IN THE TEAR-shaped island of Marinduque are warmly welcoming low-salt-and visitors in a unique tradition befitting kings and queens in their own right.

Literally meaning coronation or to crown, the putong (also called salong) is a way of thanksgiving and, at the same time, a wish and a prayer for a long, blessed life. It has remained one of the popular traditions in this deeply religious province.

The practice has been extended to relatives and guests in a gesture of love, gratitude. It is, in fact, a prayer for their success, health and prosperity and has evolved into a way of love, respect, praise and thanksgiving.

"The putong reflects the life of the people frequently," common Marinduqueños," said Prof. Ruth Acuin, director for culture and arts of the Marinduque State College.

Folk music

The putong can be classified as a folk music for it is an expression of folk's concerns and often makes use of native folk poetry set to simple melodies, he said.

According to beliefs, the putong came centuries at this kind of celebration and tradition in order for the honoree to be with his long life, happiness and safety from accidents and bad luck. The putong is likewise performed during birthdays and anniversaries, and even when someone passes the bars, new board examinations or wins in contests.

Maria Jardeleza, an 80-year-old "manunuotong" or performer from Maguga town, said she learned the song from a friend when she was 10 years old. She had taught her children how to sing the putong.

Teresa Banag, 79, said her aunt taught her the song.

In the six verses of the putong, the performance is basically similar, except for the melodies and lyrics. All singers wear costumes—the women in terno-saya and capiz, and the men in barong tagalog—and bring baskets of fresh flowers, palm leaves, and assorted coins.

They dance and sway to the accompaniment of musical instruments usually guitars and bandas.

The performance

The ceremony starts with the "manunuotong" or the "manunubong," who gathers in front of the home of the host. The host may either be prepared for the event or taken by surprise.

As they enter the house, they recognize that the purpose and mission of the host is hospitality. "Siento ay tuloy na, libre ka' mapitubay. Dinggin na namin ang mga nanunuong ngalan (Sir/Ma'am, dear host. We are already playing our instruments)," goes the song.

The first stage is known as the "pagsasaludo" (salute) where the singers slowly scroll everybody is in the ceremony room. At this juncture, the honoree is seated on a chair (supposedly the throne) at the center of the room or stage and flanked by two female members, each holding a lighted candle.

The second stage is the "pagpupugay" (bow) where the singers bow to the honoree, each holding a lighted candle.

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MARINDUQUE visitors are treated to kings and queens with the traditional "putong."

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Teresa Banag, 79, said her aunt taught her the song.

In the six verses of the putong, the performance is basically similar, except for the melodies and lyrics. All singers wear costumes—the women in terno-saya and capiz, and the men in barong tagalog—and bring baskets of fresh flowers, palm leaves, and assorted coins.

They dance and sway to the accompaniment of musical instruments usually guitars and bandas.

The performance

The ceremony starts with the "manunuotong" or the "manunubong," who gathers in front of the home of the host. The host may either be prepared for the event or taken by surprise.

As they enter the house, they recognize that the purpose and mission of the host is hospitality. "Siento ay tuloy na, libre ka' mapitubay. Dinggin na namin ang mga nanunuong ngalan (Sir/Ma'am, dear host. We are already playing our instruments)," goes the song.

The first stage is known as the "pagsasaludo" (salute) where the singers slowly scroll everybody is in the ceremony room. At this juncture, the honoree is seated on a chair (supposedly the throne) at the center of the room or stage and flanked by two female members, each holding a lighted candle.

The second stage is the "pagpupugay" (bow) where the singers bow to the honoree, each holding a lighted candle.

Flowers and coins

The honoree is showered with flowers and coins, symbolizing affection and wishes of good luck and prosperity. This is the cue for the host and the guests to throw candies, coins and paper bills to the honoree, as children and adults alike scramble for the bounty. Dances and dialogues fill the air.

It is said that the closer and the more showered the honoree is, the better.

"Kabunuan(ng) habaan ng buhay, at mahal na samang anong pinanggan. Kabunuan(ng) tawo(g) dapa, nabuhay panahong walang kawalanan. Ang tao nam(n) nate pagbuwag ng mahal na tatong pinanggan. (We are hoping that the host will live long and will have a long life. We are hoping that he/she would be free from any ailments. Let us celebrate for the satisfaction we extend.)"

The putong ends with everybody shouting "Halabaloo!" and partaking of food, drinks and candies in a "sabi-sabi."

Jardeleza said Banag agreed that the Marinduqueños should appreciate the putong as part of their cultural heritage that the next generation must preserve.

JAPAN WORK

One of the unfinished portions of the flagship project Subic Clark Tarlac Expressway exists not like a cure though as the P31-billion project that two Japanese contractors, RDPP and Kajima, were unable to finish on time.

Pagsanjan Falls trips stopped after accident

PAGSANJAN, LAGUNA—MAYOR Emilio Ramon Ejercito (R) suspended all boat rides in the Pagsanjan falls on Wednesday following an accident that killed foreign and local tourists.

Chief Insp. Leveiglilde Maning, town police chief, said Ejercito instructed him to immediately inform all resort owners and boat operators about the temporary postponement of all boat rides going to the falls.

"Mayor Ejercito just wanted to ensure the safety of all visitors and tourists," Maning told the Inquirer.

He said the suspension of boat trips would be lifted as soon as the weather cleared and until the investigation is finished.

Who's to blame?

Maning said probers were looking into possible legal responsibilities of resort owners and boat operators who allowed the boatmen to cast off to the falls despite the heavy rains.

He said he and Ejercito would also personally inspect the area where the tourists and boatmen were stranded. "But you know, it's hard to predict when the water will rise. No body can really tell when the river swells," he said.

On Sunday, 20 tourists and 18 boatmen were stranded for six hours in the river when the boats they were riding in were caught between huge rocks at the boundary of Cavinti and Pagsanjan towns.

Stranded

They included 13 Koreans, one Japanese and five Filipinos on vacation from abroad, and the 18 local boatmen who manned the nine wooden boats.

They were eventually rescued by policemen, personnel of the 202nd Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army and volunteers of the Philippine National Red Cross.

The tourists, who suffered superficial wounds and abrasions in the arms and legs, were taken to the resorts where they were given medical attention.

The Koreans were briefed by officials of their embassy and immediately brought to Manila.

Doctor Cure

Residents said the place where the tourists were stuck was actually a small cave known as "Dragon Cave."

"We couldn't really see what the area exactly looked like because it was very dark. It was also a foggy hour during the rescue operations," Maning said.

He said the tourists were just trapped inside the cave from different "takeoff points" in Pagsanjan and took the boats from the resorts where they were billeted.

"As far as we know, all the trips were scheduled by the boatmen and the resort operators. The rivers that the trips were covered by necessary permits," Maning told the Inquirer.

Known locally as "shooting the rapids," the boat ride to Pagsanjan falls routes of varying trips to at least 15 terrains along the rough river.

Maning said the visitors were on their way to the last terrain at around 5 p.m. when one of the boatmen noticed that the water level was rapidly rising.

He said water brought by a heavy downpour, which came rushing down from the mountains around the falls, could have caused the river to swell. Marlon Ramos, with a report from Abby Canlaweb Collins, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Spain keeps aid flowing to typhoon victims

By Ephraim Aguilar
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LIGAO CITY—THE Spanish government has given more 172 tons of P1,000 galvanized iron sheets to help typhoon survivors rebuild houses in Albay.

Spain's Charge d' Affaires Alvaro Iturralde said the assistance benefited 151 households from 23 villages in this city.

In a turnover ceremony on Aug. 13, Tropa and Iturralde said the materials from the Spanish government will be used for the rehabilitation of the badly damaged Ligao City Hospital.

SCHOOLCHILDREN welcome Alvaro Tropa, Charge d' Affaires of the Spanish Embassy; Jesus Molina, General Coordinator of Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional and Ligao City Mayor Linda Donadino during the distribution of emergency assistance to the affected families of Typhoon Milenyo and farming at the Ligao Gymnasium, Ligao City in Albay.

Equipment

Tropa said the money, coursed through the Agencia Espanola de Cooperacion Internacional, would be used for the repair of the hospital, as well as for the acquisition and upgrade of medical equipments.

The Spanish agency was one of the first institutions to extend help after Typhoon "Milenyo" and "Reming" wreaked massive havoc in Bicol last year.

It has already extended a total of P54 million to Albay, earmarking community projects on farming and livestock, infrastructure and education.

Farm tools

Cecil le Duep, executive officer of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, said the Spanish embassy also gave more than P4 million in farm tools, seeds, pesticides, and fingerpatch sprayers to those who had lost their livelihood in the floods.

Tropa said he wanted the Filipinos to remember the help of the Spanish government not merely as a dole-out but as a product of cooperation between the two countries.

"The Philippines and Spain are two very close countries cooperating to promote development and reduce poverty—all part of a global effort," Tropa said.

N. Cotabato rejects call to accept mining

KIDAPAWAN CITY—THE NORTH Cotabato provincial board has rejected an appeal from the Environment and Management Bureau to reconsider its stand to ban mining in the province.

During its regular session on Tuesday, the board, in a performed environment presentation, even accuses from mining.

Earlier, EMB director for Central Mindanao Constancio Paje said the ban was against legal warrants, practices and government standard policy.

Wrong signal

Paje also said the move of the provincial government to ban exploration and mining in the province would send a wrong signal to foreign and local investors and would create a negative perception of the government's mining policy.

"Nothing off the ban is relevant to the government's thrust to invest, promote and responsible mining," Paje said.

But the board, presided over by Vice Gov. Emmanuel Pinol, roared sharply to the DENR argument.

Mining operations

"Only the people of North Cotabato can decide what is more important to them—business, the environment or people's lives," Pinol later said.

He said that in areas where mining operations were allowed, people had been suffering from water to air borne diseases and their communities were prone to landslides and flash floods.

"I respect the position of our people. It's clear as enshrined in the local environment code, and we will stand by that," he said.

Environmental protection

Gov. Jesus Sacdalan said the province had always placed environmental protection and preservation as among its top priorities.

In Dipolog City in Zamboanga del Norte, the Church based Committee on Mining Issues (DCMI) said reports about a breach in the tailings dam of the Canadian-owned TVI Pacific Inc. on July 11 was proven during a recent investigation by the group.

DCMI representatives joined the investigation upon the invitation of the SMR, according to Tito Batividad Fiel, DCMI coordinator. Edwin Bernandez, Charlie Arbaiz and Ryan Rosiara, Inquirer Mindanao

TransCo

National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials, including Installation Thereof, the Restoration of Damaged Portions of the Mega - Tuguegarao 69kV Transmission Line Project (Re: TSTPTL-1)-(13)

1. The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO), through its Annual Corporate Budget, intends to apply the sum of **Philippine Pesos: One Hundred Ten Million (PhP 110,000,000.00)** for the Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials, including Installation for the Restoration of Damaged Portions of the Mega - Tuguegarao 69kV Transmission Line Project (Re: TSTPTL-1)-(13), being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to prospective parties qualified to participate in the public bidding. Only interested parties who are qualified to participate in the public bidding may submit their respective proposals to meet the ABC.
2. TRANSCO now invites duly pre-registered bidders to the Supply and Delivery of Transmission Steel Towers and Line Materials, including Installation for the Restoration of Damaged Portions of the Mega - Tuguegarao 69kV Transmission Line Project (Re: TSTPTL-1)-(13). Delivery and Installation of the TSTPTL-1 is required within **180 calendar days from contract effectivity**. The Supply and Delivery of the Project Materials is contained in Section VII of the Bidding Documents, PB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part II (IRR-II) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is open to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least seventy five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183.
4. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from **TRANSCO** and examine the Bidding Documents at the address stated in item 10 starting **September 3, 2007** from **8:00 a.m.** to **5:00 p.m.**
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders starting **September 3, 2007** from the address stated in item 10 and upon the submission of an official receipt issued by the prospective bidder or representative, in the amount of **Philippine Pesos: One Thousand Only (PhP 1,000.00)**. The Bidding Documents shall be delivered personally to the prospective bidder or representative upon payment.
6. **TRANSCO** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **September 20, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at the Board Room 1 (Ground Floor) B & C Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the address of the bid opening stated in item 10 on or before **9:00 a.m.** of **October 5, 2007**. Bids that are received late shall be declared as such and returned unopened to the bidder and in the manner specified in Section 30 of the Bidding Documents. BIDS Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on **October 5, 2007, 9:00 a.m.** at C. L. De Guzman Function Hall B & C, Power Training Center Building, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives.
9. **TRANSCO** reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the BAC Secretariat at the following address:

Mr. Richard D. Nabong
Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department (BCMD)
National Grid Corporation of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road
Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines
Tel. Nos. (632) 921-2566; 921-2572; 921-2573; Telefax No. (632) 921-2565
Email address: nabongrd@transco.ph
http://www.transco.ph

(sgd.) ATTY. NOEL J. DE LEON
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

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NEWS

Garduce conquers another mountain

By Anuch Pura

THE COUNTRY'S MOST accomplished mountaineer has added another peak to his climbing cap.

Ivan Gardiner, the 39-year-old IT professional from Balanga, Bataan, conquered Mt. Elbrus on Monday, Manila time.

Rael Chan, of Garduce's outfitter The North Face, told the Inquirer that he received a text message from Gardiner reporting his latest feat.

"He said the weather was very bad. He left two weeks ago quietly because he didn't want much fanfare," Chan said.

Mt. Elbrus in Russia is the highest peak in Europe at 5,642 meters or 18,513 feet. The mountain is on the list of the so-called Seven Summits, or the tallest mountains in each of the seven continents of the world.

The other summits include Mt. Kilimanjaro (5,895 meters or 19,341 feet), the highest peak of Africa; Mt. Aconcagua in Argentina (6,962 meters or 22,841 feet), the highest peak in South America; Mt. McKinley or Denali (6,194 meters or 20,320 feet), the highest in North America; the Carstenz Pyramid (4,884 meters or 16,024 feet) in the Australian continent; the Vinson Massif in Antarctica (4,892 meters or 16,050 feet); and Mt. Everest (8,848 meters or 29,029) in Asia, the highest mountain in the world.

With his feat in Elbrus, Gardiner has already scaled four of the Seven Summits. He already scaled Kilimanjaro in September 2006; the first Filipino to set foot on the topmost spot of the Seven Summits. He climbed Aconcagua in January 2005 and reached the peak of Everest in May 2006.

After climbing Everest, scaling all Seven Summits is considered the greatest of mountaineering feats.

It was actually the second time Gardiner had attempted to scale Elbrus. His first attempt was in August of 2006 when he had to turn back due to bad weather with a few hundred yards left to the summit.

"In effect, this is unfinished business for Ivan," Chan pointed out.

Besides four of the Seven Summits, Gardiner has climbed Cho Oyu (8,201 meters or 26,906 feet) in the Himalayan range and the sixth highest mountain in the world; and Aconcagua (6,041 meters or 19,545 feet) also in the Himalayan range.

Chan said Gardiner is en route to Moscow to catch a flight to Manila. He is slated to arrive in the country on Friday.

Mt. Elbrus, Europe's highest peak, is Pinoy's 4th of Seven Summits

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Doc holds key to UP stude's death

Diliman community mum on frat involvement

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE POLICE ARE LOOKING FOR Dr. Francisco Cruz, the man who took Chris Anthony Mendez, a suspected hazing victim and graduating student of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center at dawn Monday where he was declared dead on arrival.

Supt. Oscar Peñaso, Quezon City police District Station 9 commander, told the Inquirer yesterday that they have been trying since Tuesday to reach Cruz after he was identified by a hospital security guard as the one who took Mendez to the VMMC.

"Our police investigators at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit are looking for him because he is the key to helping us find out what happened to the UP student," Peñaso said.

According to the police, Cruz is a doctor at the VMMC, but he has not reported for work since the incident and has not responded to calls made to his cellular phone either, they added.

Mendez, 20, a public administration graduate who was appointed just last week to represent his college—the National College of Public Administration and Governance—to the UP Student Council, was brought to the hospital at 2:30 a.m. Monday by Cruz and several other people.

The victim bore bruises all over his body, reportedly on the back of his arms and thighs. Unresponsive and pale, he was declared dead on arrival by an attending doctor identified only as Jayel.

From the hospital, Mendez's body was taken to the St. Peter's Memorial Chapels on Quezon Avenue where his mother processed it from Tuesday, Quezon after she received a phone call about her son from someone who said she was her son's landlady.

A police investigator told the Inquirer that they have already identified a student who is suspected of having recruited Mendez into the UP Sigma Rho fraternity.

The source, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to talk to media about the case, said that they would invite Ariel Ibrahim Amir, the NCPAG student council chair, for questioning.

Amir, the source said, reportedly asked Mendez's friends to wish him good luck "for the initiation" which was to take place over the weekend. Mendez was a member of the NCPAG student council.

UP officials and students have refused to identify the fraternity Mendez allegedly

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'I'm the victim,' says Alvarez on mauling case

By Kristine L. Alave

FORMER BASKETBALL STAR PAUL "BONG" Alvarez yesterday pleaded not guilty to charges of physical injuries filed against him by taxi driver Wilfredo Cabanlit and MMDA-UPS inspector Gerardino Malalad in the Mandaluyong City Metropolitan Trial Court Branch 59.

Alvarez told reporters that he was the victim in the Aug. 21 mauling incident, adding that he would file counter-charges against Malalad. "I am not to blame. I am the victim here. I received a lot of blows on the head," he added.

Alvarez and Malalad got into a fight last week at the Mandaluyong City police station, after the former urged, who was drunk according to the police, was arrested for allegedly stealing Cabanlit. According to Alvarez, Cabanlit tried to pad his taxi cab fare by taking a longer route.

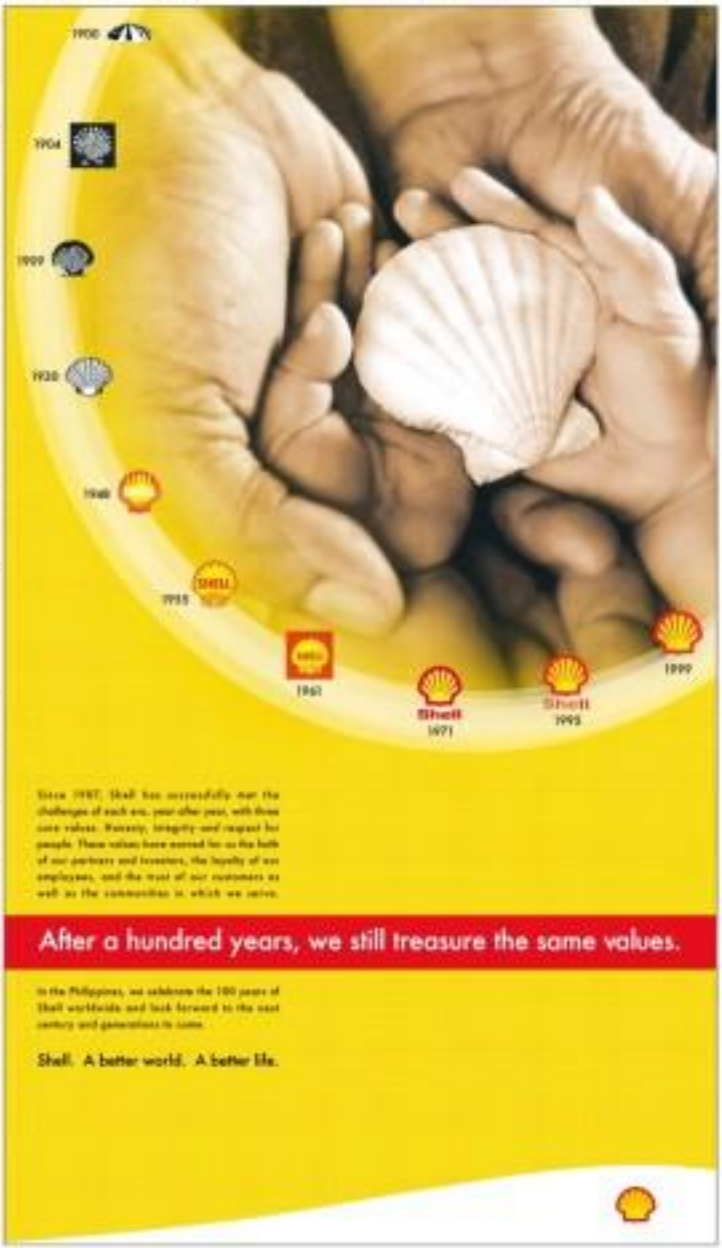
At the police station, Malalad, who was trying to get Alvarez's side, claimed he hit her face and pulled her hair. Malalad, a karate expert and Southeast Asian Games gold medalist, said she was compelled to fight back, hitting Alvarez in the face and kicking him. The television reporter was a no-show during the arraignment.

DID YOU KNOW

PUBLIC Law No. 1 of the Second Philippine Commission created in 1900 a Civil Service Board mandated to administer civil service examinations and set standards for appointments to government posts. It was converted into a bureau in 1905.

In 1959, Republic Act No. 2260 or the Civil Service Law reorganized the bureau into the Civil Service Commission, the central personnel agency of the government. The CSC is tasked to formulate rules for the implementation of position classification and compensation. It also administers the recruitment process of government officials and employees.

—Cyril L. Bonalos, Inquirer Research



Mike Velarde's kin hold juicy positions

WHEN PRESIDENT GLORIA visited the Marine camp in Taguig, Pasay City recently, many of Jovito Jalbi's tasks passed to the "border fight," military slang for meal, usually lunch, when those who partake of it pick the food using their hands.

Most of the officers who skipped the border fight included those who doubled as umbrella bearers of their Commander in Chief for inviting their fair Gov. Jaro Iloilo, wife of Rep. Wahid-Aklan, to their camp.

The Marines in Basilan suspect that Arroyo's men were the ones who behaved their comrades who died in an ambush in July.

One of those told me that if the President and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon had not been there, they would have expressed their displeasure about the presence of Abbas's wife in the affair.

* * *

Nothing will come out of the protest by the female opposition of the "Hello Garci" microtage campaign.

People are sick and tired of hearing "Garci" most of them want to throw up.

They allow Sen. Panfilo Lacson a little leeway in hearing a dead Senate because of his alleged "arrogance" angle.

In short, people tolerate Lacson, but don't take him seriously.

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

* * *

The Marine commandant, Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, is the new commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) vice Lt. Gen. Eugene Cedo, who face retired.

Cedo has been saved by the bell, so to speak, because of his retirement.

President Gloria would have ordered Cedo over the series of military setbacks in Basilan and Sulu, but she was told to let him be since he was retiring anyway.

Cedo's replacement, Allaga, is perceived by subordinates at the Marine Corps as a "do nothing" commander.

The President could have chosen a better replacement.

* * *

A note aside to the July ambush of the Marines in Basilan: Why did the survivors leave their dead and wounded behind?

At least three of those left behind were still alive when their attackers came upon them. They were tortured before they were killed. The Marines were never known for leaving their dead and wounded behind when they retreat from battle.

That was the first time they did so, and it's very discouraging. One Marine officer I talked to said the Marine rank and file have lost their strong sense of camaraderie. It's now every man for himself.

The reasons? Most of their best officers are in jail on charges of taking part in a failed coup attempt in February 2006.

* * *

"Who's afraid of Mike Velarde?" was the headline of this column Tuesday.

The answer to that, of course, is everyone in government.

In this country, religious leaders are feared more than the top government honchos because they command many votes during elections.

Velarde knows how people in government, especially civilian administrators, fear him. That's why his relatives are holding juicy government positions.

C.J. Tordesillas, married to Velarde's only daughter, is a member of the board of trustees of unabashed television IBC 13.

Sonya Velarde, married to pro-Lihl Sup Boon Velarde, a deputy general manager of the government-run Duty Free Shop.

Trader turns over explosives found in Caloocan junk shop

By Nancy Carvajal

A CHINESE-FILIPINO BUSINESSMAN yesterday turned over to the Caloocan City police 100 explosive devices, including shrapnel bombs, found among tons of scrap metal sold to him by junk shop operators.

Chief Supt. Pedro Tango, Northern Police District director, said the explosives were surrendered by David Tan, owner of Advance Trans Systems Corp.

According to Tango, the devices were "live, and if mishandled, could explode."

He described the bombs as 105mm howitzers, 60mm mortar bombs, anti-tank bombs, deep bombs and 4 hand grenades.

Tango added that the explosives, which were estimated to weigh at least three tons, were turned over to Caloocan City's Special Weapons and Tactics and Explosives and Ordnance units for disposal.

The businessman said the explosives were found among the tons of scrap materials sold in bulk to his company by junk shop owners in Metro Manila.

The NPD chief cleared Tan of any liability and said that "he did the right thing in turning over to authorities the armed bombs."

Tan's company, located on Salda Street in Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan City, is engaged in the export of recycled scrap metals to China, the police official said.

FIRE/FUN Bambu, a fire vehicle hit a row of establishments and several vehicles on Commonwealth Avenue in Barangay Holy Spirit yesterday. Five people were hurt in the incident.

Beware of 'clone' credit cards, NBI warns

By Allison W. Lopez

A SUSPECTED MEMBER OF a syndicate which makes duplicates of credit cards has been arrested by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in an entrapment operation.

According to NBI Director Nestor Mantaring, the group uses an improvised "skimming" device to download the information in a credit card's magnetic stripe. The information is then used to create a duplicate of the card.

Mantaring said it was the first time they seized a skimming device in the country. The battery-operated gadget, however, seemed to be improvised, he said.

Arrested was Melvin Tirona Garcia, 30, a driver and resident of San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan. He admitted that Ismael Hernandez Galvez, a waiter of a bar on Roxas Boulevard, is the group's mastermind.

The group's illegal activities, however, were discovered by the bank which issued the credit card. Bank officials then alerted the bar owner about their discovery.

Galvez admitted that he earned P2,500 from swiping five of their customers' credit cards on Aug. 15 and 16. He also pointed to Garcia as the one who gave him the skimming device.

An investigation by the NBI's Fraud and Computer Crimes Division, headed by Manalo de Guzman, showed that the gang used its duplicate credit cards to withdraw from the ATM machines of the BM Hypermarket in Marilao, Bulacan.

De Guzman said the gang was able to buy P64,000 worth of groceries using one of the "clone" cards.

Fire hits commercial row in QC; 5 hurt

By Jeannette I. Andrade

AN HOUR-LONG FIRE RAGED a row of commercial and residential establishments in Quezon City yesterday afternoon, injuring at least five persons.

Quezon City fire marshal Chief Insp. Oscar Villegas identified two of the victims as Leonardo Bernardo and Marvin Layaos. They were brought to the East Avenue Medical Center for treatment of burns.

Bernardo and Layaos were briefly trapped inside an electric fan repair shop where the fire reportedly started.

Villegas said the fire began at 12:08 a.m. and destroyed seven establishments on Commonwealth Avenue, in front of the Commission on Audit building in Barangay Holy Spirit.

The blaze reached the third alarm before firefighters were able to put it out at 12:00 p.m.

Arson investigators are verifying a report that an unattended store which tipped over by accident could have caused the fire.

Doc holds key . . .

Front page 4-17

joined before his death.

In a statement, UP Chancellor Sergio Cao extended the university's condolences to the victim's family. "We sincerely urge the officers, members and alumni of the concerned fraternity to extend their full support and cooperation to the University and the authorities to swiftly bring this case to an just and proper resolution," he said.

According to the security guard on duty at the hospital at the time Mendez was brought in the ER/ICU, Cruz was on board a white Toyota Innova (XDB 393) while his companions were on board two vehicles, an Isuzu Trooper (WGL 115) and a Nissan Frontier (DAS 568).

A check with the Land Transportation Office showed that the Trooper is registered to Ibrda G. Fajardo, of Culiao, Quezon City while the Frontier is in the name of the Babylon Export Inc. in Mandaluyong City. The pick-up was found to be being used by a certain R.L. Santos.

A member of the UP community who asked not to be identified confirmed the information from the LTO and said that the vehicles were being used by two UP students with the same surnames as the vehicles' registered owners.

The source added that at around 3 a.m. Monday, one of Mendez's classmates received a phone call from an unidentified caller who was using the victim's cellular phone, informing her that Mendez's body was at St. Peter's. Mendez did not have his cellular phone, instrumental roller machine cards and personal belongings when he was brought to the hospital.

UP student council president Shubaira Abdulmadid said the entire student body and the council strongly condemn what happened to Mendez.

"Until the organization that we believe is involved in this brutal incident allows, our speculation that the group had something to do with the death will not be dispelled," Abdulmadid said, referring to a fraternity she did not name.

She added that there have been moves to talk to the officers of the fraternity to no avail. The boycott also failed to reach the Palestro home and that of J Castro, Sigma Rho Council of Elders president, for comment, but was told that the justice were not home.

SIGMA Grand Alpha Ryllhamm, meanwhile, said he would meet with members of the UP Student Council and the student body to urge those who know what happened to Mendez to come forward. "We want to find out how Chris died. The entire UP community wants to find out and we are supporting any eventual protest of his death," he told the Inquirer.

METROBRIEFS

More shanties torn down

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority yesterday began demolishing more shanties along the Tripolat Gallina creek near the boundary of Pasay and Makati cities after the latter also removed squatters' residents. Three truckloads of MMDA personnel began dismantling the wooden structures at 10 a.m. without much resistance from people in the area. MMDA Sid Saludo Clearing Operations Group chief Roberto Inciong said they will clear the waterway of remaining obstructions despite the residents' resistance that they be relocated first.

Julie M. Aurelio

Man kills uncle

A MAN who shot his distant uncle through the forehead outside was arrested by Pasay policemen Sunday night after he reportedly engaged in a brief shoot-out with police. Alberto Salgot was caught by his cousin Jeffrey Salgot in front of the Pasay City Police Station. Senior Supt. Marianito Valerio said Salgot shot Cruz through the window of his car. Cruz was wounded in the left forehead, however, turned on his uncle and stabbed him.

Julie M. Aurelio

Samahang Plaridel marks Del Pilar's 157th birthday

SAMAHANG Plaridel, the association of veteran journalists and communicators, in cooperation with the Manila city government, will mark today the 157th birthday of Filipino patriot Marcelo H. del Pilar who used the pen name Plaridel. A simple wreath-laying ceremony at the monument of Plaza Plaridel in Malate, Manila, will be led by Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim. Samahang Plaridel president Rolando Estabillo and representatives from the National Historical Institute, Manila Historical and Heritage Commission and Mehuang Pambansa ng Pariral Alco organized all the celebration in Manila. Pamela, one of Del Pilar's descendants, Other Samahang Plaridel directors and officers who are expected to attend include Rodolfo Reyes, former press secretary Juliet Pefiana, Plaridel vice president, Soledad Bettran, Plaridel secretary, Jun Bautista, Jeremy Gil and Teodoro Kalaw.

Mating game: Why men go for younger women

PARIS—SCIENTISTS SAY they have carried out the first study that confirms that evolutionary pressures—the desire to have more children, in short—is what causes the typical age gap among couples.

Researchers explained the theory that men go for younger, seemingly attractive women in order to boost their chances of reproductive success, while women prefer older men because they tend to provide the resources and security that increase their offspring's chance of survival.

The investigators traveled through a Swedish population database, covering 11,300 men and women born between 1960 and 1968, to see at what age these individuals become parents.

Among couples who stayed together, the more children were born in households where there was an age difference of four to six years.

When couples split up and started again, they each opted for partners who were younger than the first.

That was especially so for older men, who went for younger wives more than younger women preferred older husbands. Women looking for a new mate generally chose a male who was slightly older than herself.

"The age preference for the partner increases (1.9) the (3.0) individual (3.9) types of men and women." AFP

Greek gov't faces heat over fires

ATHENS—GREECE'S GOVERNMENT faced a storm of criticism on Tuesday for its handling of forest fires that were raging on for a fifth day, creating a national disaster that has claimed more than 60 lives.

About 25 fires were blazing, mainly on the mountainous southern peninsula of Peloponnese which has been at the center of a crisis that began on Friday.

Hot winds were fanning the flames and testing the endurance of weary firefighters and 2,000 soldiers who have been drafted in to help.

At least 63 people have died with most of the victims engulfed by flames in isolated communities in Greece's worst catastrophe for decades, but the Fire service said no villagers were endangered on Tuesday.

Fire-fighting planes were lent by more than a dozen countries to help the Greek authorities dampen down the burning forests.

Nerves already frayed by the national disaster were stretched further when an earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale struck central Peloponnese.

The government has blamed arsonists for the fires, but the opposition Socialists said Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis was attempting to deflect criticism ahead of next month's general election.

"We are humiliated by the inability of the government to save the lives of our fellow citizens," Socialist leader George Papandreou said, slamming the allegations of arson as "dangerous."

"When the prime minister adopts such theories, it is dangerous for the democratic institutions of a country," Papandreou said.

Karamanlis, whose conservatives are tipped to win the election on Sept. 16, went on the offensive.

He called on Greeks to pull together and promised that gutted homes would be rebuilt and forests re-planted, saying: "We must do everything possible to prevent young people from becoming disillusioned and leaving their villages." Some people have been charged with arson and police were looking for evidence of further acts of fires being started in boxes which are highly flammable following two months of intense heat.

Conspiracy theories swirled around the media, but one point the unions could be clear the fires were started to clear land for illegal construction.

A navy frigate in the fight against the fires opened fire Tuesday when Reuters began to tow through pine forest near Marathon to the north of Athens.

Six planes, a helicopter and 13 fire trucks headed to the area and the fire was contained in checkers fell, a fire-service spokesperson said.

Firefighters also rushed to tackle fires on Evia, the island north of Athens where four people have lost their lives, and in western Greece.

Meanwhile, elderly Greeks evacuated from their villages said they feared they had lost everything. AFP

NZ warns vs toxic Chinese toothpaste

WELLINGTON—NEW ZEALAND (AP) Wednesday asked retailers and consumers to dispose of 11 brands of Chinese-made toothpaste after tests confirmed they contained toxic chemicals.

The Ministry of Health said in a statement that a third of the Chinese-made toothpaste tested contained "unacceptable levels" of diethylene glycol.

Diethylene glycol is an industrial solvent used in paint and antifreeze and can cause kidney and liver damage.

Some of the brands could still be on sale through retailers' last faces returned in June to ensure it. Some checks during which tests were conducted, the Health Ministry said.

Tests of toothpaste which are claimed to have health benefits are mandatory in New Zealand.

In July China banned the use of diethylene glycol in toothpaste following a recall of Chinese-made products across the globe, including the United States, Spain, Singapore, Panama and several other Latin American and Caribbean countries. Reuters

WORLDBRIEFS

'Lucy' goes on display

HOUSTON—Lucy, the world's most famous human ancestor, will go on public display for the first time when the Houston Museum of Natural Science unveils the 3.2 million year old bones brought to Houston on a 11-city tour. Lucy's remains were unveiled to reporters on Tuesday at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. The public will be able to view Lucy beginning on Friday. The fossil was named Lucy after the Beatles song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," which played during a celebration at the discovery in Ethiopia by US researcher Donald Johanson in 1974. Ethiopians refer to her as "Dikenesh." Reuters

Pilgrims flee Iraqi city

KARBALA—Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims fled Iraq's holy city of Karbala on Wednesday after a day of heavy gunbattles near the Imam Hussein's holiest shrines killed 52 people during an annual religious rite. Security sources said the predominantly Shiite city was under the control of Shiite militias and Iraqi soldiers could be heard sending the pilgrims out of the ancient centre. The general director of the al-Hussein hospital in Karbala, 110 km south of the capital said Israel received 34 bodies and treated 220 wounded. Reuters

Noriega extradited

MIAMI—A US judge on Tuesday approved the extradition of former Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega to face money laundering charges in France when his long Florida prison sentence for drug smuggling ends next month. The decision by Magistrate William Turnoff said he would recommend that Noriega be extradited to stand trial in France. The 73-year-old Noriega, who was jailed in the United States almost two decades ago for drug smuggling and racketeering after he was captured by US forces following the 1989 invasion of Panama. Reuters

3 Nato soldiers killed

KABUL—A suicide bomber killed three Nato soldiers in a dilapidated car Tuesday while more than 100 more guerrilla were killed in separate battle that lasted deep into the night, the military said. The suicide blast, similar to scenes carried out by the Taliban fighters in the south, killed soldiers according to a pledge to battle and defeat the forces of the invasion by the Nato-led alliance said. Six other soldiers were wounded in the attack. AFP

US officer convicted

FORT MEADE, MARYLAND—The only US officer held over the release several of Bagram's inmates who officials say was convicted on Tuesday of mishandling prisoners there, but found guilty of obstruction in its probe. 1LT CIA. Martin Jordan, 31, is the only US officer charged in the abuse scandal which arose last in 2004 when photographs of naked Iraqi prisoners being humiliated by grinning US troops circulated around the world. AFP

Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health

The WORLD

Lilia Lorena B. Bueza

Bush warns of 'holocaust' in ME

RENO, NEVADA—US PRESIDENT George W. Bush on Tuesday raised the specter of a "nuclear holocaust" in the Middle East if Israel's arch-foe Iran gets atomic weapons, and vowed he would not let that happen.

"Iran will confront this danger before it is too late," vowed Bush, who has pressed for tougher international sanctions and has long hinted that a diplomatic solution has been repeatedly refused to rule out the use of force.

Shortly before Bush spoke, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad scoffed at the notion of a US attack on his country dismissed a warning from his new French counterpart, Nicolas Sarkozy, as a symptom of inexperience.

"There is no ... possibility of such an attack by the United States," Ahmadinejad told a news conference marked by his characteristic defiance.

"Even if they take such a decision, they cannot implement it," he said.

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush, left, speaks during a fundraiser in Bellevue, Washington, Aug. 27...and his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, right, addresses a press conference in Tehran, Aug. 28. AFP

Analysts noted a tougher foreign policy address on Monday that the threat of sanctions coupled with an offer of dialogue was the only way of avoiding a "catastrophic alternative" as Iranian bomb or the bombing of Iran. "We are by severely open to peace and means to find a place for himself in the world," Ahmadinejad said of the French president. "If he could accept the record, meeting their maybe he does not really understand the meaning of his own words."

In a speech billed as a defense of the Iraq war, Bush branded Iran "the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism," citing its backing of Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Shiite fighters killing US troops in Iraq. AFP

US senator arrested in airport toilet

BOISE, IDAHO—REPUBLICAN US Senator Larry Craig said on Tuesday he is not gay and had made a mistake in pleading guilty to disorderly conduct after he was arrested in a men's toilet at a Minnesota airport in June.

Fine cleared in the Senate in 1990, the Idaho senator was arrested by a plainclothes police officer investigating complaints of lewd conduct in the men's public restroom at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport.

"I am not gay. I never have been gay," Craig told a news conference in Boise, Idaho. He apologized to the people of Idaho for his behavior and was a "chump" over the state because of the incident. "I did nothing wrong," he said.

According to a police report cited by the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call, the police investigator, who was in an adjoining stall in the men's room, arrested Craig on June 11 after the senator tapped his feet and moved his fingers underneath his feet and heard that are customary signals used by men soliciting sex. Reuters

THREE released South Korean hostages sit in a Red Cross vehicle in the city of Ghazni on Aug. 30. AFP

Taliban releases 3 S. Korean hostages

GHAZNI, AFGHANISTAN—Taliban insurgents freed three South Korean women hostages on Wednesday, the first of 19 Christian volunteers the Taliban agreed to release after South Korea said it would pull its troops out of Afghanistan.

Reuters witnesses saw the women being handed over to members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Ghazni province, Wearing long, traditional headscarfs, the women slept as they sat in an ICRC vehicle.

Taliban representative Qari Mohammad Yasin, who was involved in the negotiations that led to the agreement to free the Koreans, said seven more hostages would be freed on Wednesday.

He hoped all would be free in seven days, he told the Pakistani-based Afghan Islamic Press news agency.

The insurgents seized 23 Korean Christian volunteers on July 19 from a bus in Ghazni province. Two male hostages were killed by their captors early on in the crisis.

The Taliban released four women on as a gesture of goodwill during the first round of talks but said on Tuesday they had reached a deal on the release of remaining 19.

South Korea's presidential Blue House said the agreement was on condition it withdraws its troops from Afghanistan within the year and stopped its nationals doing missionary work in Afghanistan.

A spokesperson for South Korea's president, Chun Ho-sung, did not respond to questions at a news briefing in Seoul on Wednesday on whether a ransom was part of the deal but said South Korea had done what was needed.

"We believe it is any country's responsibility to respond with flexibility to save lives as long as you don't depart too far from the principles and practice of the international community," Chun said.

South Korea had already decided before the crisis to withdraw its contingent of about 200 engineers and medical staff from Afghanistan by the end of 2007. Since the hostages were taken it has insisted to nationals from traveling there.

South Korean missionary groups said they would pull out of Afghanistan to comply with the deal. Reuters

WHAT'S INSIDE
Sharapova sparkles in US Open start /A24

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molmisa Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ochoa

JRU gains NC semis with Mapua in tow

By Marc Anthony Reyes

JOSE REGIL PAZ DRAGGED SIX SAN BEDA Lions less overtime before banking one an 80-73 victory yesterday that booted the Heavy Bombers—and the idle Mapua Cardinals—into the Final Four of the NCAA men's basketball tournament at Filoil Flying V Arena.

Marvin Hayes turned on a scoring spell in the last 20 seconds as Jorge Gonzalez, 73-all, broke the eye of the Heavy Bombers dominated the five-minute extension to score their place in the new round with a clinching 7-4 count.

Ann Vidal, which last leads the Final Four in 2003, bombed Magnus (8-6) the last semifinal seat, since San Sebastian is now out of it at 6-7.

The Red Lions hastily felt the absence of Ismail Aljamal in crushing the Perpetual Altas, 86-79, to improve their leading record to 10-1.

Aljamal was not fielded in as precaution by San Beda during a press conference Tuesday where it announced withdrawal of a TRO against the league which had assured its penalize the San Beda star for joining the PBA draft without permission.

San Beda and Lyceum (8-2), which had each clinched the first two semifinal slots, clash tomorrow with the Red Lions also to take Aljamal (to their bid to avenge their only loss so far.

Aljamal will be activated, however, in the final four where the Lions already held a waiting win incentive.

The Altas succumbed to their eighth loss in 11 outings.

Box scores

Final Game

SAN BEDA (80) – Hayes 20, Gonzalez 18, Abueva 11, Perez 10, Acosta 6, Arana 5, Sajonia 3, Sarandinaki 3, Libranda 2, Lanete 1, Mingua 1, Tungcab, Pinto 0.

PERPETUAL (79) – Ebona 20, Bong 18, Lee 9, Bonifacio 7, Hayes 6, Manuel 5, Pelaez 4, Lao 4, Nebrida 2, Salangsang 2, Mabasa 2.

Quarters: 20-17, 34-38, 60-56, 80-79.

Second Game

JOSE REGIL (80) – Cruz 18, Quinto 12, Ware 11, Nuyan 10, Villanueva, Rosario 5, Casanova 4, Agoot 2, Bienvenido 2, Sevi, Ramos 0, Mangahas 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN (73) – Ortigas 17, Uriz 12, Del Rosario 12, Gallarza 10, Aquino 5, Sebastianes 4, Ramos 4, Chicano 4, Quintero 2, Bautista 2, Lizada 2.

Quarters: 15-17, 29-35, 54-48, 73-73 (OT), 80-73

PERPETUAL'S Bally Tuano gets a taste of life in the Lions' dens as he get rebounded by two San Beda players in a rebound play.

PBA teams to suit up 14 players

By Mycaeg R. Cuenillo

TEAMS WILL HAVE MORE PLAYERS IN THE coming PBA season.

Departing from an age-old practice, each of the 10 teams will soon be allowed to suit up 14 players instead of the usual 12, and spend a maximum of US$1 million in salaries when the league opens its 33rd season with the Philippine Cup on Dec. 16.

These new rules were approved in the last few days of bids bids at commissioner Sabong recent trips to international tournaments with the Philippine Team like the Jones Cup and the Fiba-Asia qualifier in Tokushima, Japan.

But here will be a slight twist that will address some concerns regarding the injured list.

Teams used to frame good players through the injured list to stop teams from picking them up via free agency—inactivating them depending on need.

This time, teams will be allowed to suit up 14 players, 12 of whom can be used during games, adding a hint of mystery going into every match as to which players a team will use.

Players who get injured will now be at home's consent on the active roster.

The salary cap is P5 million more than the amount allowed for at least the last four years, though this is what many basically spend in the past because they continue paying salaries of players who are in the injured list.

Switches of those players placed on the injured list did not affect in the cap figures and some managed teams have also convenience of "freezing" a talent that other teams are usually use.

These new rules will also make it tough for the free agents to find a new team during summertimes, as a new addition to a roster would require a team to drop a similar number to its active list.

But on the same time, these would allow teams to come up with a style complete lineup and play with a different 12 man rosters for each game.

Nike Sale
Nationwide Aug. 24 - Sept. 14
No pushing please
On selected items

Maningding tops Touring Car

SUBIC—RADIO

MIT Maningding wins under damage-laden push the best from Jody Greening

the s peed. Greening took his seventh straight victory with Louis and Sandy Romero of Team SLAM second and third. Jason Ilo of Mitsubishi-Isuzu Unison and Mitsubishi of Alvin Tuvera checked in fourth and fifth, respectively.

But the first-ever race of the season proved to be a blessing for Maningding.

Greening slowed down due to the early slippery track as Maningding seemed the lead with no longer any need to push the end.

Greening could be summing place as Lean Ramirez took third. Renato Uy of Mitsubishi-Isuzu and Mitsubishi of Shida Pacang rounded up fourth and fifth, respectively.

Vital Tigers-Eagles showdown today

ATENEO CAN LIST DOWN THREE reasons why it wants to beat University of Santo Tomas in the UAAP senior basketball competition today.

First, the Blue Eagles can still reach the 12 mountaineers get beat the Tigers cross-town rivals. Second, the Tigers can deny first-round matchup results (pp., 57-53). Third and, most important, Ateneo wants to avoid the possibility of getting bumped off the Final Four.

A repeat win by AST in their 2 p.m. match against Ateneo in the Araneta Coliseum would give that years loss and defending champion a more solid hold on third place in 7-4 while dropping Ateneo to 6-5.

But Ateneo University, in fifth spot at 6-5, could most likely get past Ateneo in the standings after their 4 p.m. game in the Tamaraw's favor as ranks for in the UP Maroons, who are still winless in their next.

"I don't look at the standings anymore," said AST coach Pido Jarencio as Ateneo ex- Sunday after organizing their ninth win over Ateneo University, 64-72. "When we were to do is swoop our remaining games and we'll take a front there. We'll just see what happens now."

Ateneo coach Boots Rosario Black will have to shed the tight turnover counter (207 total Jerry Cruz who is averaging 13.0 points per game, Rookie of the Year contender Mythe Jerez, Dabar Alphon and Aga Cruz.

Brendan S. Benitez

KART WINNERS: The Philippine kart ...after a successful stint in the second A... Indonesia. Jose Stefano Marcelo Lynco... Formula 125 Senior Open and in the ... class. Brothers Bill and Peter Sidro [illegible] Cadet 60 and Junior 80R Open, respe...

Draftees from PBL

I WAS SURPRISED THAT PBA chair Tony Chase of Red Bull was not in the PBA office yesterday morning when I called for an interview.

Since he assumed the post from Ricky Vargas in mid-August, Tony has been swearing at the PBA office daily to see to it that everything is running smoothly in the absence of a regular commissioner.

He works in tandem with GIC Sonny Barrios and the different department heads.

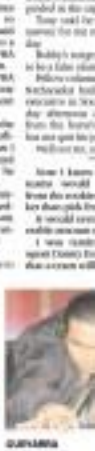
"I'm lucky to have somebody like Sonny, who has so many years of experience in the job. I've just been in seven months out of a planned 3 years, this is the first time a chair does anything like this—report to the PBA office regularly," said Tony, who was on his way to a meeting involving the PBA when I finally got hold of him.

Although he goes to the PBA office in Libis, reputedly, Tony said he comes in at different times of the day.

"Sometimes, I come in the morning, then leave immediately after lunch. Other times I report in the afternoon, spend the rest of the day there," he said.

His staff at the PBA commissioner's office said they welcome the presence of the chairman since they feel very comfortable with him.

Actually, what prompted me to



Joven-Benjie favor

THE TANDEM OF JOVEN Formentera and Benjie Guevarra broke the field when the San Sebastian Corporation (SBC) Scotch Doubles 10-ball event got going on Sept. 10, 20 and 21 at the Rhinestones Game Hall in Pasay City.

The 29-year-old Bacoor native is fresh from earning one of the four slots allocated to the 2008 JSP 9-ball Open Regular leg last Sunday while the 29-year-old Guevarra won the winner-take-all 9-

ball in Bowling Inc.

Pitgames stag derby Sept. 1

CHAMPION: Paolo Dupon...

Patafa axes nat'l mentor Posadas

By Jane Navarro

JOSE POSADAS, WHO BECAME a national coach as manager of track legend Elma Muros, was sacked from the Philippine team yesterday.

Acting on a unanimous ruling the majority of the coach rules have become the lodestar of the new United Muros, the Pasalo executive council removed Posadas from its roster of mentors now preparing the country's bets for the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand this December.

"It pains me so see Jojo go," said Pasalo president Go Teng Kok. "He helped the country win several gold medals through Elma and the other athletes he mentored."

Go said he asked most of the 30+ athletes and coaches who signed the unanimous during a meeting earlier in the day to reconsider their decision to oust Posadas.

Posadas was suspended two weeks ago after a group of athletes and coaches led by Southeast Asian Games silver medalist Arnold Poveda, Alamosita Torres, Under Candelario and Lemuel Bolotaen Eufalio Jr.filed their complaint.

"It was expected," said Posadas, who is seeking a coaching job in his alma mater the Far-Eastern University. "Even if they vote me out, the relationship will no longer be the same."

Posadas claimed he is a victim of power play, noting that some personalities close to Go wanted his head out of envy.

Posadas trained Muros on her way to bagging 11 of the 13 golds she won in the SEAG.

EXPRESS CASERS: Air 21 president and team manager Lim Ah-ieng (center) shakes hands with Doug Kramer (left) during signing ceremonies at the Air 21 Carrydome in Muntinlupa. Kramer and JC Intal (right) were signed up to three-year deals by the Express.

4 Pinoys finish Sabah tilt

SUBAH (ANS, 8/30/07) — A CEBUANO scored 49 eights while three other Filipinos were finishers in the 21st Mt. Kinabalu Climbathon held over the weekend in Sabah, Malaysia. Merlito Arbo fired 4-under 53 for the 29-hole uphill-downhill climb in the overseas Open division to finish eighth, while Nina Casaway ended up 32nd. In the team Open division, Miguel Lopez landed 45th among 127 entries. Triathlon Association of the Philippines secretary general Raymond Bacalzo placed 28th in the over-all age category, Spain's Moises Ubeda (2:44:08) topped the women's side.

don't come cheap

PBA, a developmental league scouts players that is drafted and eventually signed up.

The rest, according to PBA operations head Richie Ramos, is P120,000 for every player drafted in the first round, and P60,000 for every player drafted in the second round.

Of course it is assumed that the super players in the PBL before applying for the draft.

But no fee is slashed if a super is culled from the free agent market.

***

Air21 is scheduled to leave for Cebu next month, making the Express the fifth possessing PBA team during the offseason. The others are Sta. Lucia Realty which is currently competing in the Bristol Cup, Hardhead, which recently flew to Bahrain to participate in an armed mission, Alaska which is swarming some Asians a looney trip to the United States and Talk 'N' Text, which was seen in Manila by team owner Manny V. Pangilinan for further training.

***

Adamson Soaring Vigilantes leader Reynaldo Espinosa does with Blue Eagle Stanley Enverzon being signed up by Gerebta, the count is up from 13 to 22 members of the 2002 Aaron championship team being drafted to the PBA.

By the way, it's Paolo Bugia, the son, and not Chino, the father, who was a member of this champion team. My mistake.

SPORTSWATCH

Citibank, PLDT cop badminton crowns

CITIBANK AND PLDT BAGGED DOWNSIDE crowns in the 2nd Visayas leg of the National Consecrate Badminton over the Silliman Boulevard, Mandaluyong City, recently.

Citibank beat Metrobank in three words, 3-0, to clinch the Title Championship title of the tournament supervised by Visayas wins.

PLDT defeated Universal Pulse Corporation, 3-0, to bag the Club Championship crown.

The categories played in the two-day badminton were Men's doubles, Ladies' Doubles and Mixed Doubles.

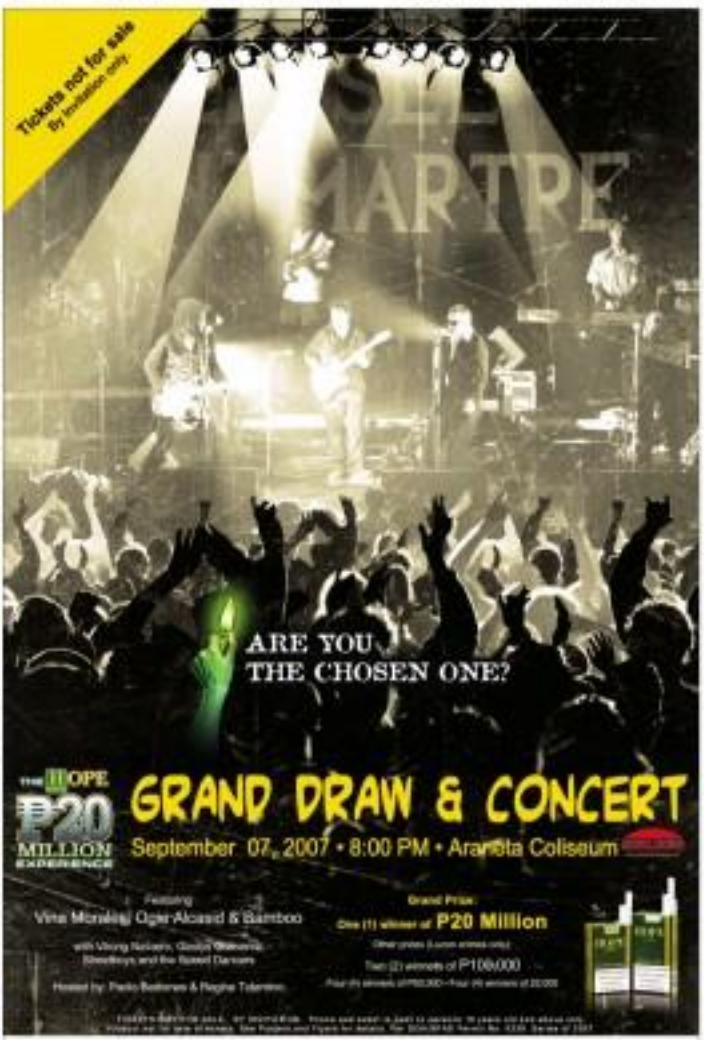
Ateneo spikers prevail

THE ATENEO SPIKERS SURGED TEAM Ateneo Blue, 20-25, 25-17, on Monday in the Premier Tennis Boys' Volleyball League of the Collegio de San Lorenzo Sports Complex in Quezon City.

Ateneo's win set record the time during both sets and if the leaders of Tommy Rivera and John Pamplona headed a rally by the Blue Makers mentored Mateo to tie the count at 20 in both sets. St. Joseph's College received San Lorenzo Ruiz, 14-25, 25-22, 25-12, while Lourdes School Mandaluyong, received Philippine Institute of Quezon City, 25-22, 19-25, 25-18. Marylou Bernardino

IGHTY

Crusader Kings owner Scott Gravett and James Cole by from Quang Espiritu after topping the record 2007 in PBTA game in Mandaluyong City. The Kings beat Valero by PBT under Commissioner Nilo C. Fernandez.



Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

SPORTS

Sharapova sparkles

'The bomb' opens title defense by blasting foe

SHARAPOVA: Dueling

NEW YORK—MARIA SHARAPOVA SHANKED a backhand wide, prompting her opponent to leap in the air and pump her fist and smile as though she won the match—or, indeed, the US Open.

Uh, no quite. That little celebration by 31st-ranked Roberta Vinci of Italy was for winning one game on Tuesday, allowing her to narrow Sharapova's lead to 6-0, 5-1.

"I win one game, I'm happy," Vinci said. "6-love, 5-love? No. 6-love, 6-15 OK."

A few minutes and one hold of serve later, Sharapova's 59-minute day was done and she was into the second round at the tournament where she produced her second Grand Slam title a year ago.

"There's no way to get rid of the memories when I walk on the court and feel the vibe," the second-seeded Russian said, 600 crystals on her red dress sparkling in the Arthur Ashe Stadium lights. "Every corner I turn here, I get goose bumps."

Her finishing play (another cross-court backhand winner) came on Tuesday as the Russian opened the defense of her US Open crown in suspiciously stylish fashion.

Andy Roddick followed Sharapova on court and beat Justin Gimelstob, 7-6 (6), 6-3, 6-3.

It was the 30-year-old Gimelstob's last match as a pro, and Roddick bagged him as the out of servant.

About the biggest problem Sharapova had was when she missed a sip of water during a changeover and spilled a spot on her custom-made outfit.

Even though it took some of the gusto out of her celebration, Sharapova had won where she missed a sip of water during a changeover and spilled a spot on her custom-made outfit.

Even though it took some of the gusto out of her celebration, saying: "It's difficult to play against her. Strong player. Nice girl. She has a nice dress."

"You can a nice outfit, and some makeup, and you're the bomb," Sharapova noted.

Sharapova's quiet challenge from her US Open title are still fresh, but it's been a decade since Martina Hingis was the tournament. This year, Hingis took a stroll around the new stadium courts and simply had to smile while scanning the enlarged photos decorating the walls.

There among the names of previous champions is one of Hingis, clutching her 1997 silver trophy, a different player and a different person.

"I'm like, 'OK, I look really young'," Hingis lamented. All that's been 10 years," she said. "Sometimes it feels like yesterday sometimes like a lifetime."

Hingis trounced Mashiko Ishizawa, 6-0, 6-3. Others winners included No. 3 seeded Novak Djokovic and No. 6 James Blake. The day's biggest early surprise came when No. 9 Daniela Hantuchova, a past US Open quarterfinalist, was eliminated by 30th-ranked Julia Vakulenko, 6-4, 3-6, 6-1. AP

Fernando stays ahead by 1 shot

By Marvey R. Castillo

GLANG, GATTE—ANTHONY Fernando shot a one-under par 71 despite another life's little misadventure to keep the lead in the WGAP Qualifier at the Riviera's Couples in post here.

The 34-year-old from Tanauan bagged the final hole but stayed ahead of a new pursuer with a 140 total after two rounds of the 144-hole event.

Jessel Abalos, the first National Caddies Open champion, carded with a day-best 69 to take second with a 141 aggregate, two ahead of Mark Fernando, Anthony's cousin, who posted a 73.

Stroked Ang Stephen again showed on a windy round, shooting a quiet level 71 for 146 in a tie with Ferdinand Asuncion, who shot a 76 despite bogeys in two of his last four holes.

Mia Fernando, the former standout veteran in the 2004 Asian Games in Soba, Qatar, rebounded from a first round 75 with a 72 to tie at 147, with Gene Stanley shooting a second straight 74 for 148 and solo seventh spot.

The 23-year-old Abalos made the turn as an ease 36 after a birdie on No. 2 and a rimmed-green bogey in the next. But he silenced inched the back nine upside down by parking up-close shots to save back strokes.

"Maybe I was just lucky," Abalos, an ex-caddie, told the business in Filipino.

KOBE Bryant, who is set to visit the country on Sept. 5 and visit kids under the care of the Elton Beke Charity, runs for an undergrad club for Team USA against Puerto Rico at the Fila America's tournament. Bryant will also hold a clinic while in the Philippines.

Argentina, US fives keep records clean

LAS VEGAS—CARLOS DELFINO scored nine points in Argentina's game-opening 22-4 run and the South Americans remained unbeaten with an 89-73 victory over Canada in the second round of the Americas championship on Tuesday.

Also the United States defeated Puerto Rico, 117-78, Venezuela beat Uruguay, 88-79, and Brazil thumped Mexico, 104-90.

While the US has been dominating the competition in Rome and with its roster of NBA stars, Argentina put heavy winning in hopes of securing one of the two berths from this competition for the Beijing Olympics.

"This was our second final important game of the tournament to not play the US in the semifinals," Delfino said. "We played good but we know this was our second final."

The key game will be against Brazil on Wednesday. The game against the US on Thursday to close the second round semifinalist. Argentina will have already secured second place and final means avoiding the US in the semifinals and a better chance at nabbing an Olympic bid. AP

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BUSINESS

Editor Raoul C. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Montano

Peso slips further to 46.83 to a dollar

Analysts see currency breaching 47 level soon

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY FALTERED AGAINST THE DOLLAR, nearly touching the 47:$1 barrier as regional currencies were again battered by global investors' growing concern over a US economic slowdown.

The local currency yesterday opened at 46.89 and hit an intraday low of 46.81 before closing at 46.83 against the dollar at the Philippine Dealing System. It shed 12 centavos from Tuesday's closing of 46.71.

A double whammy caused by re-

ports that consumer confidence in the US had fallen to its lowest level this year and another report showing that excess US housing supply had reached its highest in more than 15 years in July again spooked investor

PHILIPPINE CURRENCIES

AUGUST PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P46.83 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 15, 2007

STOCK MARKET PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

Stock market report on Page B3

Stocks close 1.3% lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.3-PERCENT lower yesterday as investors took their cue from a sharp slide on Wall Street overnight, and subsequent falls in Asian markets, dealers said.

They said this came after the US market was hit by further gloomy economic data, showing consumer confidence in August at its lowest mark in a year.

The release of the minutes from the last Federal Reserve policy meeting on Aug. 7, which appeared to dissuade hopes for a near-term cut in key rates, also promoted sentiment in the US.

The composite index closed down 67.33 points at 5,099.65, off the day's low of 5,171.13. The broader all-shares index ended down 30.02 points at 2,565.28.

Out of 156 stocks traded, 135 fell and only 12 advanced, while 29 finished unchanged. Volume amounted to 2.1 billion shares, worth P3.9 billion.

"Lingering subprime concerns clearly affected [the] consumer confidence and this weighed on sentiment today," said Jose Vivian of MI Capital Securities.

The negative data disappointed investors who were hoping that the financial turmoil is subsiding after central banks were quick to inject liquidity into their banking systems, said Irving Ackerman, president of I. Ackerman and Co. -AFP

Environment, infra projects get $58-M fund

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES IS SET TO RECEIVE $57 million in financial assistance from the World Bank and another $1 million from the Japanese government to help fund environment and infrastructure related projects.

The World Bank is providing a $50-million loan to fund the National Program Support for Environment and Natural Resources Management.

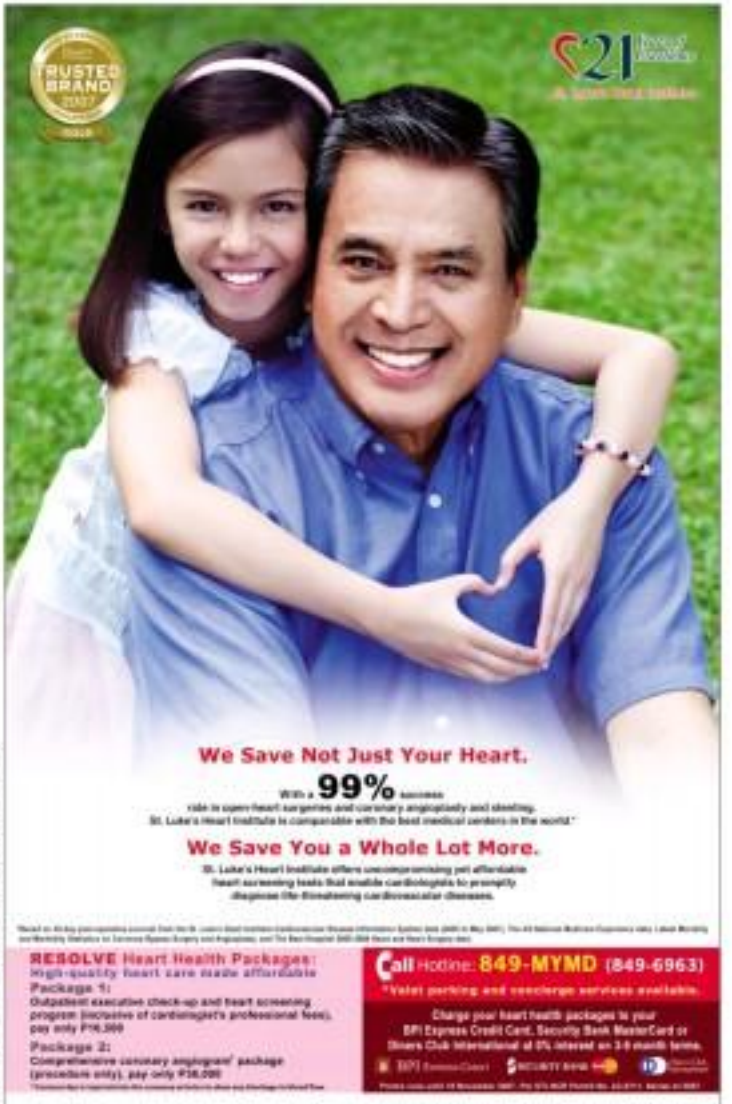
The loan will provide budgetary support for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to carrying out its mandate to manage and protect the country's natural resources and the environment.

"Much needs to be done to institutionalize in the DENR for it to efficiently and effectively protect, conserve, and manage the coastal, soil, water, mineral and biodiversity resources of the Philippines. This project comes at a very opportune time for the DENR," said newly appointed Environment Secretary Jose Atienza.

The other $7 million from the World Bank will come in the form of a grant and will be used to fund programs related to the environment, such as watershed management and implemented through coordination among local government units, the national government and people's organizations.

The $1-million grant from the Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund will be used to fund preparatory work for the Cavite Laguna North South Expressway project, which will be implemented by the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The infrastructure project is aimed at easing traffic along Aguinaldo Highway and Governor's Drive.



UCPB helps coco farmers make use of waste materials

By Amy R. Remo

THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED Coconut Planters Bank has introduced a technology to help small coconut farmers make use of waste indigenous materials.

The Korean Natural Farming Technology-enabled farmers to transform their corn organic fertilizer, pesticides and feeds using raw materials abundant in their farms.

These include rice husks, leaves, coconut husks and animal manure, which are usually just thrown away.

According to UCPB, the technology is known for its cost-effectiveness and conformity with sustainable development practices.

The technology is now being tested in Quezon, Oriental Mindoro, Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes and Batangas.

Five coconut farmers' cooperatives in Compostela Valley, Davao City, Davao del Norte and Cebu have also started training under the UCPB-Coconut Industry Investment Fund Foundation on the Korean technology.

"Our goal is to introduce the coconut farmers to better and more cost-effective farming techniques so they can become more productive," UCPB CIIFF president Edgardo Amistad said in a statement.

The program is expected to maximize the availability of cheap or organic to coconut farmers, particularly fertilizers and pesticides, especially since the prices of fossil fuel-based chemical fertilizers have ballooned.

According to the Philippine Coconut Authority, it costs about P5,000 to fertilize one hectare of land planted to coconut.

Shipping project gets perks

By Rommel M. Dominguez

THE BOARD OF INVESTMENTS has granted tax perks and other incentives to publicly listed Lorenzo Shipping Corp.'s P486-million cargo vessel project.

BOI data show that the all-Philippines-flag vessel will operate a 5,998-metric-ton cargo vessel, which would provide interisland cargo liner services to local companies.

The vessel will ply the Manila-to-Iloilo-Dumaguete-Zamboanga route and vice-versa, to carry containerized cargoes for domestic trade.

The project cost will cover procurement, engineering, supervision and construction of the vessel, capital equipment, as well as working capital.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange filed last June, Lorenzo Shipping said it was buying a 11-year old vessel from Black Sea's Shipping of Malta for $8.3 million.

Listed Lorenzo Shipping plans cargo service

According to the BOI, the project qualified for fiscal and non-fiscal incentives, like tax holidays, due to the Investment Priorities Plan's provisions for the domestic shipping sector.

Lorenzo Shipping is engaged solely in domestic interisland cargo liner services and will maintain a fleet of seven vessels as it bought the new vessel to replace an older one.

The company's vessels, deployed in the key ports of Visayas and Mindanao, have a capacity ranging from 200 twenty-foot equivalent units to 600 TEUs.

Also, BOI has approved the granting of incentives to Filinvest Land Inc.'s P96-million, low-cost mass housing project in Columbio, Laguna.

The development, called Aldea Real, will have 464 units in its 11.5-hectare parcel of land in Barangay Imbesan, Columbio.

This is Filinvest's second low-cost, mass housing project, following a P97 million project in Santa Teresa, Batangas.

Aldea Real started commercial operation last July and would employ 300 workers during construction.

Publicly listed and 60-percent-Filipino owned, Filinvest Land is one of the country's leading full-range real-estate developers, engaged in the development and sale of residential property primarily housing units and subdivision lots.

The company taps the low-income to high end of residential market with its socialized housing units, other low-income or affordable housing units, middle income housing units, upper-end residential subdivision lot and housing units such as townhouses.

Vulcan, ATN sign mining deal

PESELTA-LISTED VULCAN INDUSTRIAL and Mining Corp. said it had signed on Tuesday a memorandum of agreement with ATN Holdings Inc. to develop mineral resources in Isabela.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Vulcan EVP and general manager Placido V. Cando said the MOA would be "for the prospecting and development of minerals resources in Isabela."

Under the MOA, ATN would examine and explore for uranium within Mount's mining claims in Isabela.

After the exploration work and commercial viability study, ATN and Vulcan would determine the details of the subsequent development work.

ATN and Vulcan are expected to decide through their mutual judgment and within the terms and conditions of the MOA.

This would include the "creation of a joint venture company that will be in charge of the acquisition and operation of facilities for the mining, recovery, beneficiation and sale of uranium and such other derivative products as may be mined from the Isabela claims."

Vulcan earlier said it planned to raise as much as P600 million by selling new shares to a third party to finance the firm's investments and debt repayment program.

Funds would be raised through a 1:1 rights/private placement to Anglo Philippine Holdings Corp., a holding firm with interests in real estate, infrastructure and energy projects.

Vulcan said the proceeds of the private placements would be used over a five-year period.

It added that the 600 million in new shares would be issued for the remainder at P1 each, with 25 percent immediately due for payment by the investor, while the balance may be "called" by the firm's board of directors at an unspecified date.

Amy R. Remo

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas governor Amando Tetangco, Jr. (center) joins Toyota Financial Services Philippines Corp. executives in celebrating five years of doing business in the country. He is flanked by Mitsubishi Group chair George K.K. Yu (left) and Toyota Financial Services Corporation president Hideo Ozaki during the ceremonial cut.

US subprime woes seen to eat into RP banks' profits

Credit-linked notes invested in RP bonds

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL MARKET volatility triggered by the US credit crunch is seen depressing Philippine banks' treasury gains and easing into overall profitability for the third quarter.

And the pressure is not coming out from collateralized debt obligations (CDOs), but from another type of structured product called credit-linked notes that are heavily invested in the Philippine government's foreign currency-denominated bonds or ROPs.

"The problem is with those CLNs where investors have gone down and this will be reflected when we do the banking-to-market," one banker said.

"The first semester is good but the third quarter is really bad," the banker said.

CDOs are a type of security backed by assets and a structured credit product which serve as an important funding vehicle for portfolio investments in risky assets like the subprime mortgage market in the United States.

Although CDOs comprise less than 2 percent of the banking system's total assets based on Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas data, the sector has a big exposure to many other instruments that are heavily invested in ROPs.

Poor market sentiment triggered by the problematic subprime mortgage market in the US has weighed down on the values of ROPs and other emerging market PDSs.

"There will surely be an impact on profitability but how big or how large the impact will be, the BSP will has to evaluate that," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

"But as the market digests all the news, their action in the end will be to go back to fundamentals," he said.

With the country's improved fiscal position, rising foreign reserves and external surpluses which indicate a capability to repay foreign obligations, he said foreign investors would again warm up to Philippine investments.

Offering some relief from turbulent global markets and tougher banking regulations, the Philippine government is drawing up a new mechanism to help domestic holders of ROPs shift to peso assets.

The conversion scheme aims to keep the ROPs attractive to residents, especially to the banking system's foreign currency deposit units (FCDUs) given this year's implementation by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas of stiffer capital adequacy requirements, Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan said.

He stated that the national government and the BSP were now working together to study the dollar-to-peso risk conversion mechanism, which will be unlike global bond swaps previously in the past. The government hopes to finalize and implement the scheme within this year.

Based on estimates by the International Monetary Fund last year, more than 80 percent of domestically held ROPs were with the banking system.

The high "home bias" or domestic ownership of foreign currency bonds issued by the government has somehow reduced the volatility of ROPs over the years but the same exposure could cause potential balance sheet vulnerabilities in times of offshore market turmoil, the IMF had warned.

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Entertainment outfit Viva to go public in November

By Elizabeth Sarabia-Lacson

MOVIE AND ENTERTAINMENT giant Viva Communications Inc. is going public, possibly by November this year, top execs uncover said.

Insiders source said the planned initial public offering, which is targeted to raise about P1.3 billion, will help Viva Com acquire new technology to meet the growing demand for content to watch on handsets.

Viva Com was established in 1981 to consolidate the Vera Group of Companies' dominant position as the leading provider of cosmetic items for Filipino audiences, in various media here and abroad.

Viva Com is composed of film production arm Viva Productions Inc., talent development and management company Viva Artists' agency and home video distributor Viva Video Inc.

BDO Capital and Investment Corp. recently agreed to underwrite or manage the public offer. The investment house—majority-owned by Consuelo Ty—is also providing financial advice.

Aside from being the premier provider of entertainment content for Filipino audiences, Viva Com produces motion pictures, licenses artists' likeness material, manages artists and distributes home video products in DVD and VCD formats.

It is also the owner of the biggest

Plans to raise P1.5B for expansion

library of Filipino films with nearly 2,000. Viva produced and acquired film and television clips.

The company has a presence in all aspects of the content distribution chain, releasing material through theaters, free TV, domestic and foreign pay TV, live productions and new media outlets such as mobile phone television and SMS or MMS.

Viva Com also owns a record store chain with 60 films and television shows. Among the film artists it managed and discovered were Sharon Cuneta, Regine Velasquez, Robin Padilla, Andrew E. and Sarah Geronimo.

The company also began producing movies in 1981 with the Sharon Cuneta starrer "Bi, I Love You." It has also produced the "Regrets" movies, which launched the careers of film actors Aga Muhlach and Hayden Kho.

Viva Com has also signed exclusive deals with Sarah Geronimo and several of the country's celebrity artists, including Richard Gutierrez, Rufa Mae Quinto, Ogie Alcasid, Dingdong Dantes, Jolina Magdangal, Marvin Agustin, Dennis Trillo

BIR sets condition for compromise settlement of banks' DST liabilities

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE is requiring banks to pay 40 percent of their documentary stamp tax liabilities first before any request for compromise settlement will be entertained.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Gregorio Catabay said the tax agency was not inclined to soften on its position, especially after winning cases in the Supreme Court against some banks.

"Some of the banks were offering to pay only 40 percent of their total DST liabilities as a compromise. But we did not agree. They should first pay 40 percent as a requirement for the BIR to entertain their request for a compromise," he said.

Catabay said Revenue Commissioner Liliam Bybi had issued an order on this.

The DST liabilities of banks were accumulated since the 1990s, when banks started offering special savings deposit products.

Under the National Internal Revenue Code, time deposit accounts, which have higher interests, are subject to documentary stamp tax but certificates-savings accounts are not.

While the BIR said there special deposit accounts were subject to DST, the banking sector claimed they were not since they were savings accounts.

But a majority ruled has existed DST on these products since the 1990s.

Members of the Bankers Association of the Philippines (BAP) maintained that these were not subject to DST, citing it imposed on financial instruments.

DST is equivalent to P1 per P200 worth of documented financial transaction.

Upon receiving tax assessment notices from the BIR, the audit of the affected banks filed a case in court. Columnar said some of the cases have already been decided upon by the Supreme Court, which ruled that special savings deposits accounts are subject to DST.

He said the recently enacted Tax Amnesty law was not expected to affect the BIR's efforts to run after the banking industry's DST liabilities, which the BIR said could have amounted to tens of billions pesos due to accumulated interests.

Catabay said that while banks were not prohibited from applying for tax amnesty, doing so was not advisable for banks or any other regulated corporate entities.

Under the law, those who want to avail themselves of the tax amnesty are required to submit an amended statement of assets, liabilities and net worth, incorporating corrections from previously-undeclared earnings.

Catabay said that regulated entities that would amend their SALNs would expose themselves to questioning by their depositors or investors. "That will be a concern for people who invested in these entities," Catabay told reporters at the sidelines of a forum on Tax Amnesty held yesterday in Makati.

The forum, organized by SGV & Co., was attended by accountants and financial practitioners.

PSALM to receive first payment for Masinloc next week

By Abigail L. Ho

FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE FINAL transaction documents for the 600-megawatt Masinloc coal-fired power plant, Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation expects to get $111 million as first payment for the asset by next week.

PSALM last Tuesday issued to Mauritius Power Partners Co. Ltd. (MPPCL) the certificate of effectivity covering the sale of the plant and the final transaction documents.

PSALM and MPPCL are expected to complete their respective requirements within 60 days from the date of the closing of the transaction.

Within 10 days from the issuance of the certificate of effectivity, or by Sept. 7, MPPCL should remit to PSALM the performance bond for 5 percent of the P830 million bid price, minus bond earnings.

The 15 percent of P830 million is about P124 million and with the round fats of $7.93 million, PSALM expects to receive $11.4 million by next week.

The performance bond will ensure that MPPCL will not renege on its obligations provided under the asset purchase agreement with PSALM.

The 10-year payment of 40 percent of the bid price, minus the retired bonds and the option price of $743,000, is due 270 days after PSALM's delivery of all documentary requirements for the sale. This is equivalent to $378.6 million. The balance will be amortized over a seven-year period.

Globe expands bandwidth for Internet bundles

GLOBE TELECOM INC. (GLO) DOUbled the available bandwidth for heavy Internet users and has introduced a residential wireless broadband package that runs on 3G.

For wired Internet-only connection, Globe doubled the 768 kbps plan to 1.5 Mbps without raising the monthly fee of P995. The 1.5 Mbps plan also comes with free 40 minutes of Wi-Fi and one e-mail account with 100 MB of space.

There is also a 3 Mbps Internet only plan for P1,995 a month. It comes with 120 Wi-Fi minutes and three e-mail accounts of 100 MB each.

For Internet and landline bundle, the lowest bandwidth is 384 kbps, with 30 Wi-Fi minutes and a 50 MB e-mail account for P995 a month. There is a 1 Mbps package with 60 Wi-Fi minutes and a 100 MB e-mail account for P1,295 a month. Globe also introduced for this segment a 2 Mbps package with 120 Wi-Fi minutes and three 100 MB e-mail accounts for P1,995.

For 3G plans, the maximum speed is 5.11 kbps. The Internet-only plan goes for P995 a month. Globe also said as close to a landline for consumers willing to fork out P1,295 a month.

"We are prepared to double or even quadruple our capacity to accommodate new users. We are also working with [Chairman] Mr. [Henry] Sy and Microsoft for computer-bundled packages," Ramon Isberto C. Peralta, head of Globe's consumer broadband group, said in a press briefing.

Globe has signed up as the exclusive landing party for the trans-Pacific cable project spearheaded by VSNL International, a member of the Tata Group of India, which will link Asia directly to the US through an undersea cable system.

Globe earlier disclosed that it was spending P9 billion for the trans-Pacific cable system that will link Asia directly to the US. Read also: Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. is investing in a separate undersea cable system and is also offering broadband plans. — Rina T. Oliwenstein

Court asked to rule on North Harbor

By Rica T. Dichoso

HARBOUR CENTRE PORT TERMINAL, Inc. is asking the court to compel the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) to process and complete the bidding for the contract to operate Manila North Harbor which was awarded to Multi-Phil.

"We [Harbour Centre and Mirae] Public Investment Corp.] filed a writ of mandamus with the Manila RTC [Regional Trial Court] about two weeks ago, which the PPA and them will be a non-issued [of bidding]," Harbour Centre CEO Hubert Bautista said in an interview.

"The PPA had said before the bidding started and during the eligibility process that, under to charter, it can proceed with the auction even with just one bidder. That one bidder happened to be Harbour Centre. Then in violation with MPIC. We cannot understand why PPA changed the rules midway," Bautista said.

Several companies expressed interest to do bidding for the contract—Harbour Centre, Asian Terminals Inc., Magsaysay Maritime Corp., Port Management and Steamboating Services, and Prudential Customs Brokerage. However, only Harbour Centre was declared qualified in bid. ATI and Prudential were disqualified due to lack of eligibility requirements, MMC lacked one and Port 4 was a no-show. This prompted the PPA to declare the bidding a failure.

The PPA, instead of proceeding with the auction or entering into a negotiated sale with the remaining qualified bidder, decided to hold a new round of bidding but the offender has yet to be set.

PPA General Manager Oscar Serilla said in an interview that the regulator wanted to get the best possible offer for the contract so it preferred to have at least two bidders.

The agency is also preparing the guidelines for a negotiated bid should the follow-up attempt to bid out the contract fail.

"We already had two hearings on [before the Manila RTC case]. Let's just wait for the court to decide," Bautista said.

IBM helps RP produce world-class engineers

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

PARTNERS IN ENGINEERING PROGRESS: (From left) Science and Technology Secretary Estrella Alabastro, Stephen Brain, VP-Governmental Programs, IBM Asia Pacific, DOST Undersecretary Fortunato dela Peña and James Velasquez, IBM Philippines country general manager

IBM CORP. TAKES PRIDE IN ITS ability to help clients outcompete and gain that vital competitive edge by getting them to invest in the right kind of technology.

It does so by taking a closer look at what its clients need, in terms of systems and software, and recommending to which value of solutions that will get them from where they are to where they want to go.

The American company, which is celebrating its 75th year of business in the Philippines, wants to apply the same skills and expertise in helping the Philippines produce world-class engineers.

New academic discipline

This is through its global program championing service science, management and engineering—a new academic discipline that brings together skills in the fields of computer science, industrial engineering, social and legal sciences and business strategy.

IBM Corp. president James W. Sinegal left the country that the time is ripe to start venturing the government and various academic institutions to modify the curriculum for engineering to include these skills, which are outside the traditional sphere of engineering.

Velasquez says the engineering curriculum has to be expanded because both the local and global markets demand engineers who know more than just engineering.

Services, management

As it stands, the engineering curriculum is heavy on the engineering, math and science subjects, but little in the fields of economics, business management and more importantly, services.

IBM believes that services will define the economy of the future. Today it already accounts for 75 percent of the US economy and still growing. The US Department of Labor estimated that by 2014, four of five jobs in the US will be in the services sector, including customer relationship management, retail and hospitality sectors, and information technology.

Corporate Citizen

Interest going in modifying the curriculum to include a new set of disciplines," Velasquez says.

It says IBM was willing to bring in its experts from Europe and the United States to sit down with government and academic officials to see where the possible changes can be made.

Business, technology

"There should be a marriage between business and technology skills," Velasquez explains, "because engineers must know about the industry that they are working for."

IBM has already initiated talks with the Department of Science and Technology to introduce the new discipline.

It is also in discussions with the country's top academic institutions, including the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, Far Eastern University, University of the East, University of San Carlos in Cebu and the Asia Pacific College to see where they can collaborate in crafting a new curriculum.

Velasquez says that by providing engineering students with a more well-rounded skill and knowledge set, they will be better prepared to do a good job when they join the labor force.

"This will also help us as a country to compete with the others, because our engineers will be equipped with not just the hard technical skills but soft skills, such as in services," he says.

Well-rounded engineers

IBM says that graduates of service science, management and engineering can enter the workforce as solution designers, consultants, engineers, scientists and managers.

"After gaining practical experience across multiple industry sectors and with rapidly evolving technology tools and solutions that transform businesses and institutions, they will then go on to become senior consultants, executives, researchers and practitioners, with a solid ground in theory and practice to design complex solutions," IBM says in a statement.

IBM's professionals, IBM adds, will be experts in developing solutions for practitioners with teams across disciplines.

It is IBM's hope that through the SSME program, the Philippines will have a formidable pool of such experts.

Goings-on

Bancommerce bags awards

SMALL BUSINESS CHAMPIONS and Bancommerce Corp. recently honored Bancommerce with two awards—the 2007 Outstanding Partnership for Growth Award for Program and the 2007 Distinguished Partnership for the SME Wholesale Lending Program.

Bancommerce SVP Arturo E. Manalo received the awards for the bank. The bank's conference awards is an annual event honoring companies and financial institutions with a well-developed SME lending account.

ArtPetron winners

THE WINNERS OF THE 2007 ARTPETRON, the nationwide student art competition of Petron Corp., were honored in awarding ceremonies held at the Cultural Hall of Petron Mega Plaza on Aug. 28, 2007.

With the theme "Ako sa Pagbabalang Bukas," this year's ArtPetron drew a record 1,265 entries from art students nationwide. The winners in the art painting category are: Dave Abcar of the Technological University of the Philippines-Manila; Jonathan Bryant of Mariano Marcos State University; and Kelly Nagaly of Ilocos Norte Religious Institute of Science and Technology.

In watercolor painting, the winners are: Princess Mangaoang from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Sta. Mesa; Gerald Mungcal from Cagayan Valley Computer and Information Science College; and Ruffy Nagaly of Ilocos Norte Religious Institute of Science and Technology.

In watercolor painting, the winners are: Frederick Manuel from the Polytechnic University of the Philippines-Sta. Mesa; Gerald Mungcal from Cagayan Valley Computer and Information Science College; and Ruffy Nagaly of Ilocos Norte Religious Institute of Science and Technology.

In photography, the winners are: Jo-Ann Gotis, Ramon Magsaysay Evening Vocational School; Dave Buenaventura, University of San Carlos (Cebu City); Marvin Claudette Gopal, San Sebastian College-Recoletos; Jamerson Magpe, Asia Pacific College; James Brian Dea, PUP-Sta. Mesa; and Jean Anjie Tan, UE-Caloocan.

Tax amnesty law seminar

ISLA LIPANA & CO., PricewaterhouseCoopers will conduct a seminar, dubbed "Tax Amnesty Law: Knowing there is a Choice and Making the Right One," on Aug. 31, 2007, 12 noon to 4 p.m. at Ballroom B, Dusit Hotel Nikko, Makati City.

Speakers are Revenue Deputy Commissioner for operations Nelson Aspe, Isla Lipana & Co. managing tax partner Alex Cabrera and tax partner Wesley Lim. For registration contact: Analou (459-2040), Hazel (459-2044), Ruby (459-2046), Marlene (459-2040) or Monette (459-2048).

Peso slips further to 46.83 to a dollar

From page B1

sentiment on emerging markets.

The peso and the South Korean won suffered the worst losses against the greenback in Asian regional markets yesterday.

"There was some profit-taking toward the end of the session, however, but it still on the upside," said Ramon de Ocampo of BPI Bank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas.

He said the fix market would likely test the 47.41 barrier today.

"The credit turmoil is likely to interact with a worsening US housing slump and weaken the economy. Central banks have been hoping for a long time that credit spreads would widen but the steepness of the widening is the problem," said the London-based global economic unit of Investors Bank.

"Increased uncertainty over the economic outlook and the higher cost of credit will hit consumer and business confidence and could slow household spending and corporate investment at a time when news from the housing market is likely to worsen further," Ames said.

In the Philippines, the peso's weakening yesterday reflected the fall in the stock market caused by renewed jitters over emerging markets.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. senior vice president Rhiendo Apas said the jitters-fed fair market was on a consolidation mode and would likely test the 47.41 barrier soon.

"There's also an emerging psychological risk," Apas said, citing the bigger-than-expected release of the decision on the plunder case against ousted President Joseph Estrada.

"The flows which come into the stock market are not now massive but those from investors waiting on the sidelines," he said.

But financial markets are looking forward to some relief from a possible cut by the US Federal Reserve of its key policy rate by September.

"Economic trends outside the US should remain supportive, valuations have naturally improved, and a Fed rate cut will bolster confidence," Ames said.

The next few months, analysts said, could bring more bad news from the credit markets—not just from housing but from manufacturing and the consumer sector as well.

People, Events & Products

Editor Aries Espinosa

JCI Senate, Insular Life accept Tofil nominations until Aug. 31

JCI SENATE PHILIPPINES AND THE Insular Life Assurance Company, Ltd. are still accepting nominations for the 2007 "The Outstanding Filipino (TOdF) Award until Aug. 31. JCI Senate Philippines national presidents Senen Quinabo and Insular Life chair and CEO Vicente R. Jayme call on the public to nominate Filipinos who deserve an extra nod/ vie to the youth to strive for excellence in their chosen field of expertise and/ or contribute to the building of a progressive Philippine society.

Both JCI Senate and Insular Life see the need to inspire our young people to aim for excellence in whatever field they venture but at the same time doing so with a sense of love of country and helping improve the world they live in. That is why the JCI Senate and Insular Life continue to partner in this worthwhile endeavor, for 20 years now.

Now on its 20th year, the Tofil Award aims to give recognition to Filipinos, 45 years and older, who have made significant contributions to the advancement of their profession, public welfare and national development.

Members of the 2007 Tofil Committee headed by this year's chair JCI senator Manuel Bonoan and search committee chair Ms. Cristina Jayme have unrelenting in their efforts to search for less known but equally deserving individuals to be nominated for Tofil. They have visited various provincial cities to talk about Tofil and the need to bring to public attention individuals who have made significant contributions to their own fields especially those who do so without much fan fare.

Given the inception in 1998, Tofil has awarded a total of 99 outstanding Filipinos. The Tofil Awardees for 2006 were: Marciano G. Evangelista Jr. Secretary for Peace Commissioner Gregorio Andres, Antonio Meloto, Jr. for Humanitarian Service, Ramon G. Ordiz for the Arts Ordiz, and Socorro C. Ramos for Business.

Any individual or organization may nominate a candidate on the official Tofil nomination form. These forms are available at all JCI Senate chapter offices and Insular Life offices nationwide, or call the JCI Senate Secretariat office at 374-4890 and 411-5662 or the Insular Life Head Office at 771-2810. Nomination forms may also be downloaded from www.tofil.ph. Nominations should cover accomplishments up to June 30, 2007. Deadline for submission of nominations is Aug. 31, 2007.

CELIC PARTNERS WITH NINANG NG OFW

Country Bankers Life Insurance Corp. (CBLIC) recently signed a partnership and memorandum of agreement with Ninang ng OFW Foundation Inc. represented by Rommel G. Ortiga (2nd from left) as CBLIC Commissioner Manuel Romeo G. Ortiga (2nd from right) as Ninang ng OFW Vivian B. Bribon, CBLIC vice president for marketing, Julius Constantine Villaraza, OFW and director, and Executive Assistant Shelderic Garcia, OFW and general manager. CBLIC has underwriting track record of the 4th insurance business for the past 40 years while Ninang ng OFW Foundation Inc. aims to provide funds approved scholarship training, aid, assistance, legal assistance and livelihood opportunities to OFW members. For more information on Country Bankers Life Insurance Corp. and its various products, visit/ call CBLIC Building, 1184 Acacia Avenue, Ermita, Manila or call 527-4611 to 20, fax 526-1098 or log on to www.countrybankers.net

1ST PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW

The 1st Philippine International Motor Show formally opened at the World Trade Center Metro Manila in Pasay City Aug. 9. This event, which carries the theme, "Electrify Higher Goals," assembled the latest and the best in the top automotive companies in the country. Organized by the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (Camap), it also showcased the advanced technologies, models and requirements of modern-day car consumers. A total of 15 new car models were introduced to the personal-motoring public, including the exhibition of 6 state-of-the-art concept cars. Photo shows of the Volvo Pavilion, Senate president Manuel Villar trying out the new Volvo ID 26 Convertible. To his left is Camap president Diosdado Lee.

LIM GRADUATES MAGNA CUM LAUDE FROM YALE

Former Youngstown contributor Theresa Anne Lim, 21, recently graduated magna cum laude from Yale University (other News), Connecticut with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She studied economics (Economics and Political Science) and earned distinction in political science. Theresa's cumulative GPA was 3.87, with 4.0 being the highest grade a student can receive. Theresa was also awarded Yale University's Scholastic Recognition for her contributions to and published in the field of journalism. She wrote for the Yale Herald, yoursecondcity and co-edited Development Magazine and contributed to a variety of other publications throughout her college years. Theresa will be starting her new job as an Associate in the Global Communications and Public Affairs division of Goldman Sachs, Manhattan Area, Definitely.

DOT TAKES CHARANTIA 30-DAY CHALLENGE

Officers and staff led by Dr. Ayalen Laborador, the Department of Tourism (DOT) Undersecretary, July 26 join the Charantia 30-Day Challenge, where they were forced to drink to a healthy lifestyle by drinking to proper intake, adopting a regular exercise program and regularly drinking of Charantia after meals. The DOT "challengers" were given a nutritionist-prepared meal plan and exercise program for two months, prior a supply of Charantia throughout the... Through carefully chosen vegan feeding, those who stuck to the healthy lifestyle regimen admitted to experiencing more physical vigor level in less suffering.

3Com appoints MSI-ECS as authorized Philippine distributor

3COM ASIA ANNOUNCED THE appointment of MSI-ECS as its distributor/distributor in the Philippines following the integration of HDC in Asia Pacific.

The newly-winning distributor of networking products for the Philippines was previously appointed as the distributor for HDC in 2006. Today with the integration of both 3Com & HDC, MSI-ECS has extended its portfolio to include both companies' suite of product offerings.

"The Manila-based partnership set up will leverage on the extensive base of channel partners across the enterprise, SMB, and retail space in the Philippines as well as its experience in technology distribution in the region to support 3Com's strategy in the country.

"The appointment of MSI-ECS will provide a one-stop service and support for our extended product portfolio that came as a result of integrating 3Com and HDC, as well as market coverage via their extensive channel partner network," said Brett Orui, 3Com's vice president and general manager (Asia Pacific). "A strong local-based partners such as MSI-ECS which has a solid track record in the market, is a key to our commitment to growing 3Com in the Philippines."

"The combination of both 3Com and HDC product lines gives us an extensive and well positioned portfolio of networking equipment," said Jimmy Ee, president and CEO, MSI-ECS (Philippines) Inc. "This appointment reinforces our commitment to our resellers by giving them another leading solution to sell and enriching their business with new opportunities."

3Com Inc's presence in a leading provider of secure, converged voice and data networking solutions for enterprises of all sizes. 3Com offers a broad line of innovative products backed by world-class sales, service and support, which excel in delivering business value for its customers.

MSI-ECS (Philippines) Inc., formerly MSI-England (Philippines), Inc., is a leading distributor of Information Technology products and solutions in the Philippines. Its impressive breadth of offerings include notebooks, desktops, servers, peripherals, software, storage, networking others. The company represents such respected brands as Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Apple, Lenovo, EMC and Oracle, among others.

Bits Clips

Plaza Crest Open House

PLAZA CREST LUXURY RESIDENCES—A community for family members, three-storey garden villas and condominium buildings—will conduct an Open House activity on Saturday, Sept. 1. Considerations at the residence located on the heart of Northtrade City is close to full swing. The luxury homes, set around a lush green environment, will feature a clubhouse with fitness center and extra spare rooms, jacuzzi, gazebo and jogging paths, resort-type clubhouse with pool, swimming pool, badminton and basketball courts, three-meter high perimeter fence, and 24-hour security services at the entrance gate. Prices start from P1.07 million. Pay as low as 30 percent only with monthlies on the balance of the purchase price through their Super-Easy Payment Plan. Terms: 8 months right from All Saints' Road/Brian Island Rd., left from all Star Peaks. Situated going to San Antonio Valley 2. Plaza Crest is a luxury development of FIO Philippines Holdings Corporation. For more information, call the VMEA Area Inc. For details, call Plaza Crest at 633-6106 to 08 or 920-1968.

6cyclemind's 3rd hit from Home - 'Dinamayan'

AFTER THE SUCCESS OF THEIR 2 SINGLES OFF ITS PREMIERE MIX EP/SIDE, Down from their Home album, 6cyclemind salutes for the first time with their latest single "Dinamayan" from the same album. "Dinamayan" is a song that has good vibrations and always bring them for concerts which gives "nakakaganang ngumiti kung malapit na magsalita..." This month, the new 6cyclemind wishes their songs to touch their listeners lives as demonstrated by their anthems in Isla Sawalom, I, Tiger, Sky and Bigkas among others. Dinamayan will be the last single that will be released from the Home album as the boys prepare for a return with their all-original songs for their 3rd Album this October. Home is a collection of favorite songs from the band's influences such as Beatles, The Cure, Smith, and many more. Home album is still available at your most loved bars nationwide.

Buy 1 Take 1 Tempura at Tempura Japanese Grill

TEMPURA JAPANESE GRILL, HOME OF THE BEST BIG TEMPURA IN town, is coming by 1 Take 1 tempura until the end of August as part of its 6th anniversary promotions. Tempura Japanese Grill prides itself in serving the most succulent Ebi/ prawns deep-fried to a perfect crisp. Fortified with Omega 3, vitality and proven to have health benefits, the shrimp tempura is guaranteed to please the palate and promote good health. Tempura Japanese Grill has branches in SM Megamall, SM Mall of Asia, Greenbelt 5 Food Center, Makati Avenue, Corinthian Gardens, Tomas Morato, Ayala Center, Glorietta, Cebu City, Ilo-ilo Avenue Manila and Greenhills, San Juan.

ADU organizes Grand Academic Conference

ADMIRERS UNIVERSITY, IN CELEBRATION OF ITS 15TH FOUNDATION Anniversary, presents the inaugural Grand Academic Conference on Aug. 30-31 at the Rizal Hall Manila Pavilion Hotel along UN Ave. The theme for the conference is "Globalization and Technology for Prosperity, Reformation." The conference gathers business leaders/ politicians to bring in the fore economic and technological breakthroughs, as well as advances in human understanding, that can possibly help reduce poverty in the country. It also aims to critically analyze economic, social, religious, ethical, and cultural dimensions of current advances in science and technology, and how these affect the Filipino individual, family, and community.

DSAP holds 11th National Convention in Cebu

MEMBERS OF THE DRUG STORES ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (DSAP) will meet once again further for their 11th Annual National Convention to be held Sept. 6 to 7, at the Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Lahug, Cebu City. This year's theme-A Decade of Challenges: Looking Forward, Surging High-aptly sums up DSAP's movement during the last 11 years. Among the highlights of the seminar are the introduction of the Candidates for 2008 National Directors on Sept. 5, and the DSAP Awards Night on Sept. 6 wherein DSAP will recognize highly dedicated members with awards for Lifetime Achievement, Chapter Achievements, Presidential Merit, and Service Excellence.

'Color Folders...' showcased in bookfair

COLOR FOLDERS IN THE MIND: A GRANDING STORY OF 2001 HAS FINALLY Again December for Marketing Education. Dr. Karen V. De Bok is a polite and light soft-bound trade book for marketers and non-marketers on just about anybody interested in understanding people and consumers. The book provides Dr. Bok's earlier science into different types of consumers with insights grudged by research. Color folders in the Mind: A Grandling Story is among the bestsellers to be showcased at the Fully Booked Bookfair during the Manila International Bookfair to be held on Aug. 29 to Sept. 3 at the World Trade Center, Metro Manila. Sec. Ed Pajot does not. Karen Bok.

Ace Insurance Philippines 60th anniversary

ACE INSURANCE'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS IN THE Philippines was marked by a huge amount of optimism with its business operations in the Asia Pacific region growing at one-third to three-fifths. ACE Asia Pacific chief operating officer Eamonn Sullivan, in his speech at the recent anniversary cocktails held at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati, Sullivan said that "if there's one word to sum up ACE's current sentiment in Asia Pacific, it's excitement. We're extremely excited by the fact that this region has been designated as a key strategic growth region for the ACE Group." ACE's eagerness to expand further in the regions is being shown as they recently opened branches in Vietnam and Macau. ACE's products include Personal accident (Accidental death, disability and medical); Health insurance (Accident and sickness insurance including hospital income, critical illness, cancer and disability); Travel insurance (Business and personal); Employee benefits (Voluntary accidental Death & Disability, travel, occupational accident, shop-loan medical and dental and vision programs); as well as Creditor insurance (Credit life, disability and unemployment).

Product Files

Meet your sole-mate

THE LONGHAIR IS BACK. MEET YOUR SOLE-mate - Tikara Smooth-Heel Cream. Rejuvenates, cracked heels with its gentle yet potent formula containing oil extract of shea-vanilla-lavender fats with linoleic and a combination of beneficial amino ingredients pro-vitamin B5, bisabolol, chamomile, butter-shea-heel extract, menthol and camphor. Tikara Smooth-Heel Cream conditions the skin on your feet, keeps it elastic and helps look to resistant to prevent cracking. Reward yourself after a long day's work and free your feet from those pained, unsightly cracks. Tikara products are exclusively distributed by Philad Distribution Corp. 2nd Floor Philsteel Center Building, 8012 Rodriguez Avenue, Ugong, Pasig. tel. no. 631-9555.

Latest addition to the Welch's family

WELCH'S JUICES ARE PACKED WITH VITAMIN C antioxidants which helps protect our good cells from being damaged by "free radicals". The importance of eating foods rich in anti-oxidants help us maintain long-term health. Right in your kitchen are the latest additions to the Welch's Family - the Welch's Fruit Juice line, available in Grape, Strawberry-Kiwi and Strawberry Watermelon. These flavors are recognizable, refreshing and taste delicious. It is a very healthy beverage suitable for all ages. The packaging comes in a very family-friendly bottle with very colorful prints and should all the fruits juice-packed. The size is not too much and not too little for a single serve drink. Both of these flavors at your favorite supermarket. These are distributed by Global Beverage Philippines Distribution Inc. (formerly Tenpo Commercial) and by Fly Ace Corp with the supervision of Sanco as Philippine Merchandising Agent of Welch's International. For more information on Welch's, you may visit the website at www.welchs.com

Lizzie McGuire, Danny Phantom join JKM

JOLLIBEE BRINGS THE CUTE and courageous characters of today's popular teen TV shows in raising fund-raisers. Inspired by Disney Channel's Lizzie McGuire and Nickelodeon's Danny Phantom, the latest Jollibee Kids Meal (JKM) toys are cool collectibles that come with long-hop-rope tools and provide hours of fun with friends. Kids can take their cue from the characters' yo-yo always when it is Miss Piggy with JKM's Little Mess Gadgets. Boys can play at being a message ghost hunter like Danny Phantom with the JKM Ringer Fighters. Bring home the adventures (and mischievousness) of Lizzie McGuire and Danny Phantom for only P98 to P92 per Jollibee Kids Meal. Promo ends on Sept. 9.

Bring back the zest and vitality in your life

HDI NETWORK (PHILIPPINES) INCLUSIVE Honda Jelly can bring back the zest and vitality in your life. It rejuvenates and revitalizes your mind and body, slowing down the aging process, relieves mildly and serial pokers, relieves stress, helps people suffering from menopause, hormonal imbalances and high cholesterol, among others. For inquiries call 926-9000 or visit # 80 Matalino St. cor. Mother Ignacia St., Quezon City, Philippines 1103 or 2nd floor, Suite 202 Jollibee Plaza, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Website: www.hdinetwork.com.ph

New Le Frogge collection

LE FROGGE PHILIPPINE INDEPENDANCE 2006 swirls the boy's lives apparel, comes out with a new collection of casual tops for school, work and leisure with a blend of comfort and function. The brand makes use of light and cool fabric for convenience and durability. Le Frogge's new collection is a combination of the latest styles of Le Frogge jackets that are perfect for the rainy season. Le Frogge items are available in SM Department Store nationwide.

BUSINESS

Dell plans to send Pinoys to call centers abroad

Philippine unit best in customer satisfaction, says company

By Record N. Domingo

DELL INC. PLANS TO SEND higher-trained Filipino employees abroad to help train up call centers in its global network.

This is part of the Dell philosophy of deploying experts where their jobs are needed.

"When we moved here in the Philippines, we brought in people from the United States, Panama and elsewhere," said Michael J. Gardiner, country manager of Dell International Services Philippines Inc.

"Now, it is the Filipinos' turn to send some of its best people to help out with new sites," Gardiner said.

Asked whether there were such plans, Gardiner said there was none so far but that Filipinos were lined up for deployment.

He said this was partly a result of the prestige that Dell's Philippine call centers have earned.

Its Pinoy call center was cited as best in customer satisfaction, under Dell's worldwide internal recognition system.

Dell has 20 call centers spread across the globe, employing some 78,700 team members.

As for local expansion, we noted we have things would be taken up much 3,000 employees," Gardiner said. "We will screen how we are doing and decide on what to do next."

"What we are really excited about the quality of work that we turn out here and our ability to scale up our services," he said. "That says a lot about our team members."

He also said that the firm was going for more high-value services as it expects to reach its targets would have of 3,500 people ahead of schedule.

Dell operates two sites that cater exclusively to users of Dell products, one at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City and another in Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City.

"We already have 1,100 people in Pasay and 700 in Eastwood," Gardiner said. "The plan was to grow to 2,500 people by end 2007, but we stop do that sooner."

He said the company's direction was to add more service offerings and go up the technical ladder rather than grow in number.

"This does not necessarily translate into an expansion of workforce but more of retraining existing employees (for more complex jobs)," Gardiner explained.

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Generali collected P1.3B in premiums in H1

By Michelle V. Rono

INSURANCE FIRM GENERALI PILIPINAS has collected P1.3 billion worth of premiums in the first half, putting it on track to meeting its goal of increasing sales this year by 30 percent.

Joe Ferreria, Generali chief marketing officer, said in a briefing yesterday that the company plans to generate P3.7 billion in premium income this year, up from last year's P2 billion, and that the goal looked "achievable."

Ferreria added that Generali was financially healthy enough to meet the government's solvency and capitalization requirements this year, and onward due to new law requiring an insurer capitalized only because of "timing."

Generali's life and non-life insurance arms were both included in the list of companies that fell short of the government's capitalization requirements, based on the Insurance Commission's list of undercapitalized firms as of June this year.

But Generali explained that it was only included in the list because documents regarding its capital infusion were still being confirmed by the regulator.

Last month, the Insurance Commission issued a statement declaring that Generali was already sufficiently capitalized after recognizing the capital infusion.

Ferreria also the Insurance Commission had already stated before, we don't have a funding problem. What happened before was just really an issue of timing," Ferreria said yesterday on the sidelines of an "Be Safe and Sound" home safety campaign.

Generali is owned by Italian insurer Assicurazioni Generali, with Ayala Bridgeland Asia and Banco de Oro Universal Bank, which has a bancassurance agreement with Generali.

Meanwhile, Generali has teamed up with the the Philippine National Red Cross and the Makati City government to get homeowners to learn the value of securing their property with non-life insurance.

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APL Philippines
The Philippines is a key South East Asian market for global ocean carrier APL. The company has had presence here since 1917, and today has nine branch offices and extensive operations throughout the country.
APL is a global top-10 container transportation provider and its sister company, APL Logistics, is a leading provider of international integrated supply chain services.
Both companies are part of the Singapore-listed global transportation and logistics group Neptune Orient Lines (NOL), whose 2006 revenues were in excess of USD7 billion.
APL's services to the Philippines are complemented by more than 60 weekly services and nearly 500 calls at more than 50 ports to Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. It combines world-class intermodal operations with leading edge IT and e-commerce.
APL has a presence in Asia-Pacific and the Americas and controls a fleet of more than 100 container vessels, which carried 2.1 million forty-foot equivalent units (FEU) in 2006.
As in other markets, APL is very much part of the Philippine community. APL supports several charitable initiatives which explore the education of less privileged children including providing special reduced freight for the "Books for Barrios" initiative and donating decommissioned cargo containers to be converted to classrooms for the students at Philippine Christian Foundation schools.
After over 90 years, APL is committed to moving business forward in the Philippines long into the future.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 16, 2007 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle Editor Chichi Barcelo-Fermosa

WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD

Looking for more than just a pretty 'face'

MARTA Manzon's beautiful cakes

KITCHEN RESCUE
Reggie Aspiras

COULD YOU RECOMMEND A bakeshop or someone who bakes theme cakes? This will be given as a gift. I heard Marta does delicious and pretty theme cakes. If you have her e-mail address or website, I will really appreciate it if you can send it to me as well as your other recommendations.

DEBS LOPEZ-ADAO

I have different answers depending on what I want and my budget. Seriously, the best for me are for luxurious cakes, that is the size and only Pink Cling (tel. 0917-5126470), for top themed sugar iced cakes, of course, there is Marta Manzon (0917-5307285). There are also Melissa Lim (0917-8928000), Jean Jao (0917-5329927), and so Carmen.

Indeed, you are right. Marta makes them very, very artfully as looks and taste!

Recently, she opened a cake shop at Tan Ranch and Iremidra to showcase her works of art, at her Serendra branch, you can even have a party. She will organize it for you complete with baking/decorating sessions for the kids.

'Ube' favor

Been trying to make ube jam but remain unhappy. I love ube and everything that has ube. Any ube Bude and jam recipe?

MARITA

I, too, Marita, love everything with ube. My latest discovery is Jyn Legaspi's ube pastillas.

I thought her regular jumbo pastillas were perfect for my sugar craving. One piece and I got my fix, or so I thought, till I tasted her ube variant!

It is pulsating pastillas complete with the ube! Everything about it is well done and perfectly executed—from the packaging to the manner in which the pastillas are so evenly draped into oversized logs and individually wrapped! Truly every bite is well worth the price! It is far far the best in its category!

The funniest that some so for thanks to her mom's (thanks) (congrats) wedding. Wondering why all the pastillas for sale were so ube while those made by their mother were so huge, they thought, "Why not make it a business?" And sweet business it turned out to, indeed!

The pastillas are sold in regular, tomato and ube (tel. 7298321 and 0928-2677432).

Here is your ube jam recipe! Enjoy! I love ham gravy and gummy this is!

Ube jam

- 3 c fresh ube, grated (pick the ones, deep purple ones)
- 1½ c water
- ½ c butter

LE CORDON BLEU MANILLA
ENTRECHEF LITE COURSE
PAK!

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS
PBA

the Maya Kitchen

Flavored Rice, Processed Meat Toppings and More...

Put your favorite flavored rice and simple flavors home processed delights. Maya Kitchen flavored rice recipes using your rice, their formulation and preparation. Ten ingredients. The books offers delicious flavored Rice mix. If you have desire to open a rice toppings business this book may help you. Read more...

Flavored Rice & Rice Toppings Sept. 15 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Garlic Rice, Pineapple Rice, Adobo Rice, Salmon Rice, Tapa Rice, Tocino Rice, Longganisa Rice and Chorizo Flavored Rice. P 1,500.

Chinese Cooking Sept. 15 (Sat) 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Pork Tao, Chinese Lumpia, Mami Pancit, Pork Quenteria or Asian Beans, Chinese Chopsuey. P 1,500.

Barbecue Dynamite Sept. 15 (Sat) 6 - 9 p.m. Barbecue Sauces, Pork Rub, Cocktails, Mojo Barbecue Pickings and Barbecue Marinades. P 1,500.

Appetizer Sept. 22 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Barbecue Cubes, Pork Rind, Cocktails, Mojo Barbecue Pickings and Barbecue Marinades. P 1,500.

Chinese Snack Basics Sept. 22 (Sat) 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Siopao, Cuapao, Mami Pancit, Pork & Vegetable Quenteria and Curry Lumpia. P 1,500.

Coffee 101 (Barista Class) Sept. 29 (Sat) 9 a.m. Espresso Coffee History, Coffee Process, Espresso Machine, Brew Ratio, Grinder Setting, Technique Evaluation. P 1,500.

Traditional Hot Coffee Concoction Espresso, Cappuccino, Latte, etc. Cold Coffee Concoctions and Tasting. P 1,500.

Coffee Flavorings Sept. 29 (Sat) 2 - 5 p.m. Mint Chocolate Flake or Fondant Icing, Cinnamon Bread, Mocha Espresso Pods, Pasta Sample, Puttanesca Pasta & Aglio Olio (w/Shaving Preparation). P 1,500.

Decorating Tips Oct. 20 (Sat) 9 a.m. Basic Piping, Combination of Piping & Flowers, Types of Icings (Royal & Simple Icing), Making of Popular Cookies Decors including Materials. P 1,500.

CERTIFICATE COURSES FOR ADULTS (Limited enrollment, pre-registration required)

Basic Culinary Sept. 4, 11, 18, 25 (Tu/Th) 6 p.m. - 10 p.m. Proper Hygiene, use of Kitchen Equipment, Knife & Knife Techniques, proper measurement of ingredients, stocks, soups, sauces, methods, types of herbs & spices, considerations, proper purchasing, storage, techniques in preparing & serving poultry, fish & meat, dessert including pastries & cakes, breakfast preparation. Free Diskette. Fee: P6,000

Fundamentals of Bakery Production Sept. 17-NOV 29 (Tu/Th) 6 p.m. - 1 p.m. Basic & commercial baking techniques applicable in the use of various ready mixes, dough preparation, yeast breads, quick breads, cakes, cookies, pastries, icings, fillings for Commercial Basic Productions with Free Diskette. Fee: P9,000

Basic Cost Control Sept. 27 & 28 (Th/Fri) 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Fundamentals of sales-depending volume, Food Materials Control, Standard Recipe, Basic Kitchen Equipment, Menu Planning, Food & Beverage Cost Control, Production Control, Purchasing, Receiving, Storing, Issuing, Food Handlers Training Program. Individual workshop of using equipment & sales budgeting. Free cake decorating kit. Fee: P4,000

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 9th Floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave., Pasay Road, Makati City or call tel. no.: 892-1188 or 892-5011 loc. 700, or e-mail us at mkkitchen@skyinet.net.com.ph

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MISANDIGMOS — BY JOHN ETTEDGUI

TULDOK — BY RAFU AND TATUH HILARIBELARDE

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

By Ann P. Stutzberg
Huntington Beach, CA

Answers

HOROSCOPE

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20). You're hardworking! You want to make money. But there are times when moods and impulsiveness, and even emotions, are important for you to be able to trust your intuition. You normally jealous, even when you want to be. In some early 20s, you will seek and learn to reconcile your own impulsiveness with your practicality. You are gifted with intuition and psychic powers and know it/feel/sense it. (Compatible signs: Cancerian (Sep. 22 to Oct. 22), Virgo, Capricorn (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19), Scorpio (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21), Pisces (Feb. 19 to March 20).

ARIES (March 21 to April 19). Ah, Aries, a wondrous day for you. The Moon is in your sign, fueling a wonderful season in horoscopes. Jupiter, its ally, will be there, too, and you might get a

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20). If you work diligently, either alone or behind the scenes, you might be recognized for the support you'll show on Wednesday. Your relationship is available now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20). This is a wonderful day to celebrate with friends and groups. You feel safe, warm and loved. You feel safe, warm and loved. You feel safe, warm and loved

Dining Out

MANGO DELIGHT
Pho Hoa Noodle House serves Vietnamese specialties. It offers popular Vietnamese noodles, vermicelli bowls, salads, rice toppings, a la carte dishes, and tasty mixes. You can cap your meal with Mango Crepe with Ice Cream, a dessert of fresh mangoes wrapped in green-colored crepe and floating in mango caramel syrup and chocolate cream. It is topped with vanilla ice cream. Pho Hoa is at City Walk 1, Eastwood City Libis, Quezon City (+63 (2) 9848 or 421 (91), or text 0917-3296775).

Restaurant's milk of choice

JACK'S LOFT, ONE OF THE very few restaurants to open at Eastwood City, offers an array of comfort food to help indulge stress.

Its dessert menu is particularly popular because of its specialty, Jack's Cheesecake, consisting of graham crumbs pastry base filled with cream cheese and eggs and topped with strawberry, blueberry or mango preserves. Also a favorite is Decadent Chocolate Cake, a rich concoction of caramel and ganache.

John Vitat Seng, Jack's Loft manager, said they had wanted to use Magnolia in their desserts, as well as shakes, coffee, soups and some main courses. But food safeguards and grilled chicken. The milk, he said, was rich, creamy tasty and naturally pure, making cakes more flavorful and rich.

Available at Star Lane Executive Store, Magnolia was the Quick Evaporation process that regulates water content without altering basic milk composition. Thus, the thick consistency and creaminess of granulated milk is retained.

New tapas, entrees

ALBA Restaurant's Cordillerade Vaca al ensalada

ALBA RESTAURANT has added new dishes to its El Fogon and Tapas Area. Recently added to the menu are the meaty Cordillera Vaca al ensalada (seafood special Mediterranean al Tapa. New cold tapas are Tortilla Catalana, Tomates, Tomate and Bikini Mahi Tomate. Alba Restaurant is also introducing Pa pan Artesanal, Spanish tomato bread, among others. Alba is in the Casa Real de Vaca and Plaza de Mercedes. Alba Restaurant Español is at 38 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati (8900950 to 8900959; Tomas Morato corner Scout Lozano, Quezon City (920-9912, 920-7108, 413-7852); and Ilee Lo da Lifestyle Center, Eastwood City, Libis (637-2279-171).

GOLDEN HARBOUR features a unique fusion of Hong Kong and Filipino cooking. The HK-style Emerald Seafood Treasure Soup may prove a pleasant surprise, with its assorted seafood and sliced farm contained in fresh consommé. The HK-style Crab Bihi Hot Pot is a clear rice topped with sliced salted duck. Dimsum sausage and liver sauce with Kaylan vegetable. On the other hand, the HK-style Golden Kowloh Hot Pot is a combination of sliced beef with Chinese herbs and exotic roots. Also accompanied by the chef is HK-style Prawn Sotanghon with Dalmai egg. Golden Harbour serves more than 150 items. It is located at 138 West Ave., Quezon City, near North Edsa. (9351680, 9358888 to 92).

SUPER BOWL OF CHINA Restaurant Mabang offers Super Chinese Fiesta Merienda. Pinoy merienda with a Chinese twist. Now for all to savor snack buffet for only P128 per person. The promo features a noodle dish, soups, dimsum, congee and others with a single serving of iced tea or lemonade. It is available Monday-Saturday, 3:00-5:30 p.m. The Super Chinese Fiesta Merienda promo is available until Oct. 23 exclusively at Super Bowl of China Festival Mall Alabang.

Cod and bass recipes, crepe buffet

THE REGENT ASIPHAS SCHOOL OF CULINARY Arts is offering the following classes:

Aug. 31—Chicken and Sauce (all level): Cod with Smoked Garlic Beurre Blanc, Chorizo Cod, Fried Cod with Strawberry Sauce, Grattaue Barnish with Garlic Butter, Pan-fried Seabass with Arugula Pesto and Mushroom Risotto, Deep-fried Whole Bass with Oriental Black Bean Sauce.

Sept. 1—The Ultimate Crepe Buffet (upper class, all level): 6 Crepe Recipes (Seafood, plain, curry, truffle, dessert—citrus and chocolate), Fillings (seafood, shark, turkey, beef, vegetables and pork), sauces (Herbed Bechamel, Brown Mushroom, Cheese, Saffron Cream, Tomato Chunky), condiments and Toppings over 15 crepe combinations, bonus: Crepe Samosa.

Sept. 3—Oriental Snacks (all level): Fried Siopao Bread with Bamboo Asado, Coconut Milk Bread with Ketsup Pasis, with Hoi de Go, Pan-pan Chinanghai or Stewed Pork Legs, main Noodles with Oriental Garlic Bread.

Sept. 5—Most Popular Chicken Dishes (all Level): Truffle Oil Chicken, Garlic Chicken, Berries Chicken, Honey Mustard Baked Chicken, Cheddar Chicken, Alfe Arbee.

New class schedules are out for September-October. For complete schedule and inquiries, call 5589306/5073008/5070362.

COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fortes

Kulinarya recipes in Cebu

OSTER
Bistogueña with squash vinaigrette

CHICKEN Inubot

CHEFS Salvador Cristobal, Glenda Barretto, Myrna Segismundo and Miguel Fortes

AN EXTENSION TO THE Philippine Food Festival at the Shangri-La Mactan Resort and Spa has become a welcome one for two years running now.

It is only part work and more excitement because the sea and accommodations are relaxing and the company of friends is great for food adventures.

The friends are Glenda Barretto of Ha Hun and Myrna Segismundo of Restaurant 1901, who were asked once more to do the festival. Jessy Ong, Jr. of San Miguel Pure Foods Culinary Center joined them.

The menu consisted of recipes that will be in the book "Kulinarya," which will contain standardized recipes for Filipino dishes. The two weeks of the festival was an opportunity for the chefs, who are also part of the project, to test the recipes for both formal dining and buffets.

The opening dinner was held at the Ocean Pavilion of the resort. Four tables were reserved up for government officials and media, including Tourism Secretary Ace Durano and Governor Gwen Garcia.

Timothy Wright, resort general manager, welcomed the guests. Pairings by featured Cebu artist Andrew Ba-ha in cards contributed to the convivial décor.

Passes the test

The appetizer samples included fish flambe in small glasses, lumpiang ubod in pandan and ulang served with its vinegar dip. For the Cebuanos' favorite sweet, the tanggay-tanggay (malagkit — sticklike) was excellent, a great compliment from tapenade and tobang (lavia variation) and lato chilly.

They also liked the way the lumpiang ubod was presented not in its usual spring roll form. The idea, though, could have been crisper and, for the cooks, smaller shrimps would have been better.

It told us, who were involved in field tastes, that instructions on last-minute frying and the size of the shrimps should be included in the recipe.

Before putting my spoon into the Bantigue chicken binakol, I touched the side of my hand and found it hot. That

CHICKEN binakol

(he soup was served at the right temperature was heartening.

The taste was entirely correct, light (only mixed with coconut water that gave it a slightly tamarind flavor. And the chicken, instead of being cut, was ground and formed into a dumpling (quenelle) pierced with lemon grass. This is the way a traditional soup can be presented without taking away from its taste.

The non-dish served was a personal favorite — pinais na alimango. It was lime crab steamed then its meat picked, cooked in coconut cream with young coconut strips then put back in to the carapace, wrapped in banana leaves and charcoal-broiled or grilled. (The recipe is in "Flavors of the Philippines" by Glenda Barretto).

Fresh carabao is shown in its cava juice. The banana leaves give off that smoky aroma that enhances this dish.

At the buffet in Tides, the coffee shop of the resort, the photo was the obvious hit, always the line collecting in run out.

Binok was served not in the usual soup but as a real steak cut cooked to a perfect medium well, the calamansi and soy sauce mix spread out around it, the caramelized onion and a squash vinaigrette on the side.

A must

Again, the dish came in last, a plus and a must when serving Filipino food. At the Tides buffet, the binok was on the carving table, a whole tenderloin sliced by thin pieces when ordered, with the soy-calamansi sauce and caramelized onion separate. It was a lesson in a new kind of presentation.

Dessert was served at two buffet tables. There was banana torot, made smaller and thinner. The bonis de Mercedes was also smaller than usual. The ladie filan was cut into individual servings. And there was a variety of kakanin or rice cakes like dilis and cassava cake.

Mr. informed Secretary Durano that the Kulinarya book would be launched at the end of the year. He said it would complete a group of projects in his department such as the book on bilot for the "traditional tourism" forum. Kulinarya is part of the culinary tourism program.

The festival dishes are featured for lunch and dinner buffet at Tides until Sept. 5. Glenda and Myrna brought their respective chefs, Salvador Cristobal and Miguel Fortes, who can very confident but taught the kitchen staff of the resort how to do the rooster of dishes.

Though we know the recipes by heart now from the many testing and rewriting for the Kulinarya project, we were surprised at how good the pinais using mussel turned out at the festival.

Chicken is boiled using water, some ginger strips and only five garlic fish sauce, the pale pure that is amber in color with a mild flavor. The chicken emerged as tender with just a hint of the garlic, the sauce thickened with mashed hard-boiled egg yolk and garnished with dilli leaves.

We were happy that the Italian chefs made its way to the South, making Cebuanos (who do not really use pesto as dipping sauce much less use it for cooking), as well as the many foreigners in the resort, aware that there was much more to Filipino cooking than the usual.

Pinaisang Manuk

Chicken Stewed in Fish Sauce

(from "Kulinarya")

1½ kg chicken thighs
2 eggs
2 c or 480 ml water
120 g fresh young ginger
About 10 stems/250 g fresh dill leaves
¼c or 60 ml cooking oil
¼c or 60 ml oil
¼c or 60 ml patis
1½ c or 360 ml cold water
Preparation:

1. De-bone the chicken thighs and cut meat into cubes. Reserve the bones.

2. Hard-boil the eggs. Ice; only the yolks. Mash.

3. Peel the ginger. Cut into thin strips.

3. Remove the dill leaves from the stems. Wash.

Cooking:

1. Heat the pan/sauté pan with oil, sauté ginger strips. Add the chicken pieces and the bones and the fish sauce. Sauté in high heat until the chicken pieces are golden in color.

2. Add the water and bring to a boil.

3. Lower the heat and simmer chicken until tender. Remove the bones.

4. Mix a little of the broth into the mashed egg yolks. Add mixture to pan.

5. Before removing from heat, add the dill leaves.

Serving suggestion: Arrange the chicken pieces in a bowl. Pour in the hot broth with the dill leaves. Serve hot.

Looking for more than just a pretty 'face'

From page C1

...fill in condensed milk
Moist food color, optional, depending on color of ube
2 tsp vanilla extract
¼ c butter
Mix cake mixes, ½ cup butter and condensed milk in a heavy saucepan.
Continue to stir with a wooden spoon or a whisk until thick.
Add vanilla and remaining butter. Mix well.
Cool and serve.

FIA LAGDAMEO'S ube pastillas

Searching for figs

I have been trying to find figs for some time now and so far with no success. Would you know where I can buy fig-like shoots (bud)? I am really curious to taste and cook with it. (Ike na lolo pa; just have to scratch). Also, can you throw in some of your fave fig recipes?

KMD

Figs are flowers of the fig tree, not the fruit. Also known as a false fruit, they are made up of many characters of flowers and seeds that grow together to form a single fruit.

Dried figs are high in dietary fiber and are a rich source of calcium. They are also said to be antidiabetic, substances that fights diseases resulting from diabetes.

Dried figs are available all the time at Rustic Hub (tel. 7228278). Occasionally, fresh ones are available from Glasshee (0917-8950911).

For (love) and figs—what a perfect combination! Here's a recipe, Rissi!

Scratch not itch no more!

Chicken Liver Crostini with Figs

1/3 c butter
1 c onions
1 tsp garlic
½ lb cleaned chicken livers, coarsely chopped
1 bay leaf
½ tsp each fresh thyme, marjoram, sage, tarragon
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tbsp brandy
French bread, sliced thin and toasted
In a skillet, heat butter. Add onions and garlic, saute until translucent.
Add rest of the ingredients and cook liver until it changes color.
Drain liver of any remaining liquid. Mount on toasted French bread. Garnish with figs.

Fig Compote:
1 c figs, sliced
½ cpoot
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp butter
Combine ingredients, except butter, in a saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil.
Simmer for 10 minutes over low heat. Add butter. Use as garnish for crostini.

You may use the same fig compote to top your pan-fried/dry-grip—Sicilian Swiss with mixed greens tossed in balsamic vinegar and olive oil. Garnish salad with roasted apples and sauteed fresh mushrooms.

E-mail the author at inquirer@inquirer.com.ph

9th tuna festival opens Sept. 1

GENERAL SANTOS CITY HOLDS the 9th Tuna Festival beginning Sept. 1. Theme this year is "Oro Pulso, Dito Store, Dito Casino."

The annual event in the city known as the country's "Tuna Capital" celebrates the abundance of tuna in its waters. It coincides with the 20th founding anniversary of the city.

The new festival song, "Sikom-tad Dikatong!", will be launched during the festival. Bebot Hans is festival director.

Featured celebrities on Sept. 1 include Angelica Panganiban, Derek Ramsay and comedienne Pokwang. Other guest celebrities are: Residences Sept. 4, and Magic and Rocksteady on Sept. 5, Smart Day.

Also on Sept. 5 is the launch of Coca-Cola's Masaraba shindig at the Plaza Dolor.

Other activities include the free Gintong Ilog Kawsa and Rib Lim Lampas, Bagay and Masarhoni. A grand parade on Sept. 5 caps the festival.

Every day of the week-long affair will end with a fireball night. A kite festival called Sea Creatures in the Sky Fish Fun at the Fishport, and a dance rave sponsored by Mindchild are also scheduled.

THE CONSUMER

The little airport that can

By Linda B. Bohlo

THE ISMELDA DOMESTIC AIRPORT MAY be showing its age, still our runners help but appreciate the modest efforts of the management to make it more comfortable and convenient for travelers.

And those little touches were in place even before the terminal fee was raised to P200.

For instance, despite the cramped space, the airport has set up a children's play room, and a massage cubicle.

The restrooms are relatively well-maintained although the fixtures obviously need to be replaced (actually, the whole airport needs a bigger space and more modern amenities) and janitors are constantly moving around picking and sweeping up after people who seem to think littering anywhere is classy behavior.

But the one thing I always want to have the airport organizers do (and service be arriving passengers.

Although coupon cabs are available, one always has the option to take the metered cabs that are lined up in the terminal just outside the arrival area.

With only a security guard—sometimes aided by an airport personnel—manning the terminal, people would be free and seat for their turn.

Disconcertingly, of course, you get the rude and crude person who tries to jump the line and a taxi driver that has just dropped off a fare trying to get ahead of the one that have been waiting patiently.

As one passenger found out recently, that kind of behavior rarely yields good results.

A taxi maneuvered itself ahead of the rest and, as I refused to take it, the person behind me hastily got inside the cab, no doubt thinking she was being clever.

Not surprisingly she just as quickly got off after the driver quoted her a rate way beyond what she would pay by taking a metered taxi that was waiting in line.

Why the international airports—both the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the Centennial Terminal—could not have a similar efficient system is beyond me.

Are they powerless against the coupon cabs that monopolize transport service to these airports?

Feedback

This brings me to the complaint of reader Celia de Jesus, a recurring one actually that authorities seem powerless to address although every now and then they itself and puff and threaten mayhem for offenders.

De Jesus puts it mildly to her e-mail when she says, "It is just so disappointing why several taxi drivers ask for additional charge apart from the actual meter (reading)."

It is not just disappointing, it is irritating and a violation of existing rules and regulations.

De Jesus said a driver would justify the additional charges as due to the distance he had to travel, the traffic, it was raining, gas was expensive, he had to pay to be able to wait in a taxi terminal or he did not have change.

(From experience, the people value collect "fees" in taxi terminals are in no way connected with the establishments. At the SM Mall of Asia, for instance, I noticed a couple of people wearing shirts similar to the uniform of MOE taxi drivers hounding taxis and collecting a "fee" for it. At Harrison Plaza, people scamper to nail a cab for customers and get P5 from the driver while still expecting a tip from the passenger.)

"What's the use of (having a taxi queue) if it wasn't be followed? Not all passengers can afford to give tips. And (the passenger is) not encouraged to give more (than the actual fare) with such an attitude. I hope the proper authority will take notice. This should not be tolerated," de Jesus said.

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Makati-Sta. Mesa Sts., Makati City, or e-mail lbohlo@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Edna Bonnie G. Velarde

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

THIS EXCLUSIVE photo of Elijah Pelaez, left, was sent to Inquirer by his Lolo Boo Boo. Elijah's parents are estranged couple Meryll Soriano, far left, and Bernard Pelaez, center.

Families reunited

By Marinel R. Cruz

THIS BABY REUNITED THE families of his estranged parents, if briefly.

TV actor Meryll Soriano delivered little Elijah Pelaez at 10:41 Monday night at the Makati Medical Center, and both sides of his family were "joyous and excited."

"Meryll was in great pain, but she smiled when she saw the baby," said Boo Boo Soriano, who was beside her daughter throughout the labor. It was a normal delivery, with the baby weighing 6.3 lbs. The father is actor Bernard Pelaez.

Meryll and Elijah were to be discharged yesterday.

It is the first grandchild for comedian TV host Willie Revillame, Boo Boo's former partner.

"The baby is so good-looking," the proud parent/host told Inquirer Entertainment in a phone interview. "The shape of his face is like his mom's."

Four months

Meryll and Bernard tied the knot in a non-profit civil wedding last October at the San Juan Municipal Hall. The ceremony was officiated by Mayor JV Ejercito.

The couple, both exclusive artists of MBS-ONE, broke up after four months.

"Bernard and his family visited yesterday. They couldn't wait to see the baby. He's the first grandchild in Bernard's family, too," said Boo Boo. "Meryll's grandparents, her cousin Mel, siblings Michael, Ben and Kaye were here as well."

Meryll's famous aunt, actress Marichu Soriano, is in Hawaii promoting a movie.

The new mom remains weak on the no-man-adventure soap series, "Super Inggo Book 2," in a few months, Boo Boo said.

ZAMORA as "SS Officer Spielerhoyt."

RP's Bruce Lee was 'very tired'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MORNING RAMON ZAMORA DIED of a heart attack, Sparrow Entertainment boasted, the action-comedy actor spoke in his one shoot quitting show business.

"My father said he still had many projects with ABS-CBN, but that he was already very tired," Bryan Zamora, 21, said. "I told him, 'Sir, 'wag kang magsalita nang ganyan.'"

Ramon, once regarded as "Bruce Lee of the Philippines," having starred in a string of martial arts movies in the 1970s, was at his home in Barangay Mayamot, Antipolo City, when he collapsed on Sunday night.

"He was taking a bath," Bryan recounted.

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FEEDBACK

From Maria Payet (marlepayet@gmail.com), Makati City:

Hi! Thanks so much for writing about Elliott Yeatts's upcoming Philippine court tie but a lot of hate in the country, and we're very excited about his visit. In fact, the "hatemongers" have a pro-homosexual and are already here: more than 170 members! Sara Soria Anjuta, Sixto and Indonesia are coming to the Philippines just to watch Elliott. We'd be glad to provide a fan's perspective if you need another fanzine articles.

RP's Bruce Lee was 'very tired'

From page B1

ed. "At home with him was a young niece and a maid. Some relatives tried to remember him on the way to the hospital, but it was too late."

The actor was brought to the Maribina Valley Medical Hospital along Sumulong Highway in Marikina City at around 13 p.m. He was pronounced dead on arrival. He was 32.

A happy wake

Bryan said his father had left instructions for a happy wake, where only joyful songs would be played and sung.

Bruce is survived by his children Brandon, Gigi, Brynn, Gary, Zhi Zhi and John. His remains lie at the Marian Memorial Chapel, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City.

He was last seen on ABS-CBN's drama series "Magkaribal Sinofia Mars."

Stunt man

Bruce started his career in 1959 as a child actor and dancer in several B/W movies; he also danced on TV and in the theatre.

He often spoofed Adolf Hitler, bothering in heavenfried German ("Spoilsport") or Chained Jr's "Super Gallin," This stint had won for Mrs Bruce Aryan Citizen's Award for Television.

Biggest break

But his biggest break came when he starred in a series of kung fu movies like "Enter of the Dragon" (1973), "Return of the Dragon" (1977), "Game Fighters" (1978), "The Experts" (1978) and "Dramatic Action" (1980).

Annie Brazil at Mandarin tonight, Parokya at Folk Arts tomorrow

PAROKYA NI EDGAR has two reasons to celebrate in its major concert "Mantra Manday (Pyesta sa Parokya)" tomorrow at the Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas (Folk Arts Theater).

The band was signed to Universal Records after the late Bella Da Tan caught one of its gigs at Club Evolel 11 years ago.

Since then it has recorded nine albums, which have collectively sold more than 800,000 copies—a very good average by Philippine standards.

Its latest CD, "Mantra Manday PG-13 (Singles 1995-2007)," just went gold.

Fans would be glad to know that vocalist Vince Montano, who has taken an indefinite leave from the band, retains his stance as the crooner.

Performing as guest bands are Bamboleros, Chord, Sponge Cola, Urbandub and Bloomstruck 88. Call 811-9999.

RACHEL Anne Wells

It's all in the genes

The jazz family of Jessie Brazil and children Richard Mark and Rachel Anne Wells perform in a one-night gig, "It's All in the Genes," tonight at Cayetano's Bar, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati.

Jessie, a top-rate singer who still performs in weekly shows in New York, is thrilled by this rare musical reunion on stage. "What I always tell my children is that if you like music and you have an inner voice to answer it, then go for it," she says. To her surprise, Richard and Rachel have also become singers.

"But I didn't really push them to follow in my footsteps," Annie notes. "Then again, it didn't look like they had to be pushed. It's all in the genes, as they say."

Mother, son and daughter have now already come out with "Somewhere Over the Rainbow"; Richard, "Mania"; and Rachel Anne, "Cool"—all under Richard's Maxon Records label. The CDs are available at the gate before and after the Mandarin show.

Call 750-1483/892-0060 or 757-4720.

Folk music icon

Pinoy folk music icon Freddie Aguilar performs at LA Cafe, corner SH Del Pilar and Balete Streets, Manila, on Sept. 11.

Bamboo campus tour

"Pembuppe Higher Learning: The Bamboo Campus Tour" moves to the University Theater, UP Diliman on Sept. 15 or 6 p.m.

Visit the season's Pembuppe boutique for details.

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1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10, 11:30

LAST LEGION PG13
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BOURNE ULTIMATUM PG13
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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Five hot dogs – three with ketchup and mustard

From page D3

News, ever

•Carmelora Malabad on being silenced by former PBA player Bong Alvarez at the press conference where he was brought after beating up a cabbie: "Bakasalong-ano. Saul, as a

martial artist, we were taught na do not do the first strike, never ever. You're back ... to defend yourself! Usb him back dahil pinagtulukhan ka ang sasakyan."

•Bong Alvarez on the incident: "Pero nasabihan lang ang [expletive] kotse ko! Inwalibo!"

•Gloria Muhlach on her estrangement with husband Bong Alvarez: "Honestly since ... managed na downing magkaibigan si Bong. There was this time na I wanted to give up already."

•Alvarez on the most controversy involving Bong: "Sabi ko kay Bong, itong layong dalawa ang mahal ko. Ikaw

dawn ang dawn kids that are really affected ... kaya umandal ka kay Bong, tigil mo si stop. Ikaw have those gifts. Thru kaw sa stop."

•Antoinette Taus, Alvarez's manager, who had rushed to the station: Uy, wala pala siyang studio.)

Bossa Jolito

•Jody Aric Sotto on getting pregnant: "Xena before I reach the age of 20, malamalo sha. Pero ang dami kasing opportunities na dumarating ... Hindi ko sasbin na mahaba. Dios mmit sha sa pagbabalansingin bago ako makasal."

•Jennifer Sanders on his relationship with the parents of girlfriend Staci Evangelista: "Maybe dinner [ang relationship namin. Ang simandi lang sa akin si Heart, cookies to love them and he pattern-kni ganyan tulgo ang tago magulang. Ikwang pumalaman gid ko nang relationship ni Inang bukay ko. Sa buong buhay ko, ero ne [sen. Ngayon ang pinakamatagal ko nang kasama." (Got that.)

NOW SHOWING!
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Shang Cineplex

AT THE CINEMAS

GLORIETTA 1	1	2 THE INVASION	3	4 A LOVE STORY
GLORIETTA 4	1 EVAN ALMIGHTY	2 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	3 THE INVASION	
	4 ARE WE DONE YET?	5 THE LAST LEGION	6 A LOVE STORY	7 1408
GREENBELT 1	1 THE LAST LEGION	2 THE INVASION		
GREENBELT 3	1 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	2 THE INVASION		
	3 ARE WE DONE YET?	4 THE LAST LEGION	5 HAIRSPRAY	
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THE INVASION	2 THE LAST LEGION		
	3 1408	4 SUPERBAD	5 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE INVASION	2 1408	3 A LOVE STORY	4 THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM
MARKET! MARKET!	1 MY GUY'S WEDDING	2 THE LAST LEGION		
	3 A LOVE STORY	4 THE INVASION	5 1408	
TRINOMA	1 A LOVE STORY	2 MY GUY'S WEDDING	3 EVAN ALMIGHTY	4 SUPERBAD
	5 1408	6 THE LAST LEGION	7 THE INVASION	

AT THE MALLS

Ayala Malls

glorietta — Season Exhibit — August 22 to September 2, 2007 at the Activity Center

GREENBELT — Greenbelt 5 Expat Park presents Collection of Anime — August 29 to September 10, 2007 at the Greenbelt 5 Lobby

ALABANG TOWN CENTER — Alabang Town Center Grand Opening Shopping Spree Promo — July 1 to August 31, 2007, Alabang

AYALA CENTER CEBU — Lifting Kiosk — August 6 to 26, 2007 at the APEC Access

MARKET! MARKET! — Multi Car Show — August 31, 2007 at the Central Plaza

Circlaglia — Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids — at REP's Solaire Theater – Opens August 11, 2007 — For inquiries, pls. call 891-0718

Ayala MUSEUM — Museum of Philippine Arts, Transformation in the Late 19th, 20th century — June 16, 2007 to January 6, 2008 at the 3rd Floor Gallery — For more info, pls. call 757-7117 or 21 loc. 12 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org

Tri Noma — Luxury Car Exhibits — August 24 to 30, 2007 at the Activity Center

glorietta GREENBELT TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU Tri Noma

DID YOU KNOW...

Axed

LONDON—THE next series of British reality TV show "Celebrity Big Brother," which produced a series bullying row involving Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty, has been axed, broadcaster Channel 4 said.

The last series, aired earlier this year, produced nearly 45,000 complaints from viewers as well as thousands of protests in India after Shetty was called "Shilpa Poppadom" by fellow contestants. AFP

Eastwood City

The Members

Every Thursday, 8:00 PM
Eastwood Fuente Circle

Eastwood City

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS

Araneta Center

Gateway Mall

Cubao X'po

EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

THE INVASION	LAST LEGION	1408	
DON'T LOOK BACK	MY EGYPT WEDDING	RUSH HOUR 3	
A LOVE STORY	WAITRESS	EVAN ALMIGHTY	THE INVASION

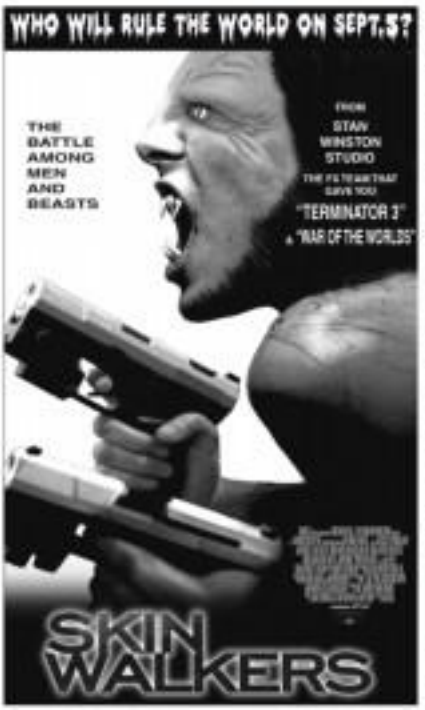
Gateway Mall 5

1	LAST LEGION	2	1408	3	THE INVASION
4	MY EGYPT WEDDING	5	A LOVE STORY		

ARANETA COLISEUM

UAAP BASKETBALL GAMES

NCAA CHEERING COMPETITION



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ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

The difference between 'best' and 'second best' in acting

SEVERAL REASONS have reacted to our article on the "overlooked" Cinemalaya who deserve to be on the list of 25 best Actors recently run by two publications. Most of them agree that the overlooked films of Ruben Rustia and Vic Sotto's are among our best ever.

In addition, some readers have urged us to specify which actors on the list shouldn't be there. This is a game of "naughty, naughty"—played at our expense, since we're the ones who'll have to fend off the resulting brickbats from the "second best" actors and their lovers hurt. So, readers, we're not agreeing to step on that land mine, thank you very much.

Let's look beyond personalities and figure out why some otherwise gifted actors end up falling short of greatness.

• An actor may shine as a dramatic performer in his youth, especially if he's entertained by our best directors. Actors he bestows popular, however, produces cast him in romantic comedies that become big hits but debate his acting capital, and prevent him from developing his talent further.

• Another actor established himself as a popular star mainly because of his good looks and entertaining performances style. Somewhere along the way in his long-running career, he misunderstood and even overcame awards.

In truth, however, his acting is only primitive and not competent. At about mature, so he's never really broken through to terra of the excellence of his potentials.

So why did he win all those awards? Because our awards systems is often subjective and otherwise flawed.

A word to the wise: Hire Isa'l. Brando nor Rudge not an actor's worth based to the awards he's received. The best proof of was put to her talent is the actor's acting performance, nothing else.

• A third actor is talented because his controversy was deemed to be deeply dark, complex, psychologically troubled and insightful. He goes beyond the politics and ghost of stardom to really dig deep into his character's soul—or, so it seems.

In actuality, however, the actor's performances are was dreary, uncontrolled and constricted, as if to say, "Look at me, I'm a genius, because they're all about the person (The Method), not the product (the character created).

There's a article in the auditorium actors of this psychologically constricted sort should keep his mouth. Their are Asher stuff, Meaning, a great actor does different things, but he makes them look unsightly easy.

Also, an actor should diagnose into the character he's playing. The self-consciously "psychological" actor calls too much attention to his own persona, as a "look" actor, he deliberately is not.

Feedback

From Paul Montol of Manila on City: "On a July Sunday afternoon, tune in to dzRH-FM 100.3 MHZ and be mesmerized by the golden sounds of oldies but goodies' being dished out by voice on DJs like Ernie Zarate on his program 'Echoes of the Stage and Cinema' 12 noon to 1 p.m., followed by the inimitable Jo Jose Diego on 'This I Like,' 1-3 p.m.

"At 3-4 p.m. comes Ron Tesoro with 'Out and the Past and the Music,' then Lito Gonzales with 'Mr. Music,' 4-5 p.m.

"What's more, listeners won't be 'bothered' by commercials—because there are none."

* * *

From Antonia Tamolo of Quezon City: "Another fine actor video letter's been given his personal video communication by his talent is Romnick Sarmenta. I saw him in a stage play and he was impressive. I also admire the acting of Tirso Cruz III, Jun Sabayachan and Nino Muhlach, if only he'd be given another chance..."

* * *

From Mona H. Pareja of Cebu City: "I have been compiling Boots Duke Reviews and our group really finds them both funny and educational. Looking forward to the next batch."

HIGH SCHOOL classmates Kim Rhea Ramos in these snapshots circulating on the Net. "Tis was advanced," she said in a TV interview. "Para sa mga 14-year-olds [she's 17 now], cute 'yan eh."

Amalia and Ogie: Post-birthday sentiments

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal

TOO bad I wasn't feeling well, that's why I missed the birthday parties of two people close to my heart—Tita Rosa (Amalia Fuentes) and Ogie Alcasid, who both turned a year closer to the dreaded 40 filmdom. They shared with me their post-birthday sentiments.

Tita Rosa's bash was a gathering of close friends and relatives at her mansion. After the recent strain in her marriage, she has trained more prayer.

"The celebration brought loved ones closer to my side. Now I know what is important to me—it's my family," she said.

Dolly Ann's survey on heart deeper to find if any could see more joy. When asked about her marriage/husband, La Amalia just laughed. "I no longer expected anything but to remember my birthday. He can't even remember his own age!"

Her daughter Liezl and kids brought her favorite cooking, cake and complete collection of original Elizabeth Taylor-Richard Burton movies. In turn, Tita Rosa gave Liezl a copy of "Badong," which she was pregnant with her.

Lovers' prove

Ogie had a post-Valentine party, a birthday gift from his ladylove Regine Velasquez. "The highlight was when Reg and I had our first dance. Also, when Khalil Ramos, Gary V and Ann-ne jammed with Side A and sang 'Heart to Heart'," Ogie said.

Boni Ilo's really bright at 40 for him! "Life begins where you work. Ito 'yon, beautiful si con-ba," he said. "Everyone must a song to hear about the day life was, it would be 'This is the Moment'."

After coming out in the open about his romance with Regine, and his ex-wife Michelle Van Etten re coming to Reg's rescue against her detractors, what else could Ogie ask for?

"It below kids with Regine. But we'll take it one step at a time." The weighted and the congestive have definitely taken all the right steps to be and have a long happy way to go.

Birthday boys, To Rosa Thanks for being my second mom. Even true I look at you, I see the woman I wanna be.

Birthday Dinner, Ogie mentions. If I had three wishes. I'd wish for three copies of you.

E-mail: mailto:bigbold@inquirer.com.ph

Five hot dogs—three with ketchup and mustard

By the Inquirer and INQUIRER.net Entertainment Staff

NEW YORK—Hot dogs from a Times Square street vendor? Helicopter? Is it what Lance Armstrong benefit in the Hamptons? All part of Evangeline's (what) mind New York weekend.

Hipsters Road Pitt and Angelina Jolie were spotted Friday with kids Maddox, Zahara and Pax shopping at Lee's Art Shop to and from Manhattan. Baby Shiloh was not there. According to the New York Post, she usually flies back to Los Angeles to Jennifer Aniston.

Pitt and Jolie have been in Namibia, where Pitt ventured deep into the bush to shoot a movie. Jolie, who is pregnant with twins, stayed behind in a luxury camp.

The celebrity couple enjoyed a culinary upgrade the next day when they attended a fundraiser at the home of Tribeca Film Festival co-founders Jane Rosenthal and Craig Hatkoff in Stonecliff, New York. AP

* * *

Top of the talk shows

The three who missed last weekend's show biz gridiron. Good who we on record, if anyone missed.)

• ABC's Rosie O'Donnell's reunion early "Fun Ira Prodig ng Pose" co-star Tim Robbins. "Bitin yon eh. Sa susunod pag may film pa tayo [on Miriam exclusive na sa susunod pa] hindi na lang 'yon," O'Donnell said of supervision pa 'yon.)

• Dominican born celebrity chef Cat Cora, 41, talked to us mid-morning via our desktop line at her suite at the Mandarin Oriental hotel in Manhattan. Cora, who is the mother of two boys, Jake, 7, and Tristan, 5, is the first female chef to appear on Food Network's popular "Iron Chef America" series. She competed against Bobby Flay in an episode that aired Aug. 19.

• Corinne Hidalgo, a native of Puerto Rico, is the executive chef at Suba, a restaurant in Manhattan's Lower East Side. Hidalgo, who has been cooking professionally for 15 years, was also featured on "Iron Chef America" in an episode that aired Aug. 19.

KATRINA Halili

Rushes

Who's asking be?

• Hilarious Ike Sinamban's appeal, for the public to accept or husband Ogie Alcasid's name love, Regine Velasquez. "Sabay ng ina Lualaquen magagamit ang pangalan nila. Kung si Regine ang sasabihin niya, ako ang bahala sa kanya. Pinanganak ko 'yan. Pinoy ... language niya siya. Mahal 'yan, napaiyak niya rito, lagi ko ang maanak." (Something lost in translation there.)

KRISTINE Hermosa

• Meghan's tearful reply: "Tina lucro kom ang [Lopez] ang [Lopez] ang [Lopez]